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THE FRENCH LEFT
AND
DEFENSE POLICY

Mary Elizabeth Walsh

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

Monterey, California



THESIS

THE FRENCH LEFT
AND
DEFENSE POLICY

by

Mary Elizabeth Walsh

December 1977

Thesis Advisor:

David Burke

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THE FRENCH LEFT
AND
DEFENSE POLICY

by

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Captain, United States Air Force
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

from the
NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
December 1977

ABSTRACT

This study reviews the historical development of the socialist and communist movements in France, focusing specifically on the origins and evolution of their attitudes regarding problems of national security and defense. There is an investigation of the philosophical, social, economic and political conditions which gave birth to socialism in modern (i.e. post-revolutionary) France. This study attempts to illuminate the differences, as well as the similarities between the Socialist and Communist Parties, the two main branches of the French Left. This study, also, demonstrates the difficulty experienced by the two Parties in reconciling their theoretical ideals with contemporary practical exigencies. During the 20th century, the French Socialists and Communists have already collaborated in two predominantly Leftist governments. This study reviews the defense decisions made by the Leftist ministers of those governments and the defense plans elaborated by past and present party leaders of the French Left.

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INTRODUCTION

"Mitterrand: 43.4/Giscard: 32.8" - a prediction for the March 1978 elections? No, these are the actual results of the first ballot voting in the 1974 elections for president, in which Francois Mitterrand, the candidate of the French United Left (i.e. Socialists, Communists and Left Radicals) missed a first ballot victory by only a few percentage points.¹ With the 1974 political race narrowed from ten to two candidates in the second ballot, France became polarized, and Giscard, candidate of the moderate/rightist forces, won by only one-and-one-half percentage points, a mere 350,000 votes.² Strong popular support for the Left is not a recent phenomenon in France. By 1914, the second largest single party in parliament was the French Section of the Workers' International (SFIO). By 1932 the SFIO had become the single most popular party in France, and from 1936-1938 a leftist Popular Front governed the country. From 1944-1947, the French Communist Party (PCF) could claim to be France's most popular party, for it had emerged from the Second World War as a hero of the Resistance.³

Looking thus at past and present election return statistics, it appears that an increasing number of Frenchmen are using their democratic freedom of choice to bring a socialist/communist government to power. Why is this? Why does socialism have such appeal in a liberal democratic nation like France--one where the importance of the individual and his

inviolable rights is held far above any consideration of community or group cooperation? This is to be one of the questions addressed in this study.

In 1972, the Socialist and Communist Parties, together with the Radical Left Movement (MRG), signed a common program for the government of France. This marked the beginning of an official union of the French Left, against the political groups which had been ruling France for the previous 25 years. The goal of the united Left was national power by electoral means. In 1974 the goal was almost reached. After a further demonstration of public support for the Left during the 1977 municipal elections, it appeared certain that a majority of the French nation was ready to elect a Leftist-dominated national legislature in 1978. This certainty dissolved, however, in September of 1977 when the Left suffered an apparently irreconcilable split. But the fact remains: a large segment of the French populace was supportive of the united Left and its policies. Any foreign military analyst desirous of understanding current French attitudes toward issues of defense, cooperation and security must take into account the positions advocated by the parties of the French Left.

This study reviews the historical development of the socialist and communist movements in France, focusing specifically on the origins and evolution of their attitudes regarding problems of national security and defense. First, there is an investigation of the philosophical, social, economic and

political conditions which gave birth to socialism in modern (i.e. post-revolutionary) France. If one wishes to understand contemporary French Leftist policy positions, one must understand the reasons underlying the development and the appeal of socialism in France. As the study proceeds to trace the growth of the French socialist movement, emphasis is placed on persons and events that have had the greatest influence on the formulation of Leftist policy dealing with national defense, the disposition of the armed forces, and French participation in wars and war-materials development.

The modern development of the Socialist and Communist Parties in France was significantly influenced by the appearance of fascism, Stalinism and Gaullism, to name only a few common factors. But this does not mean that the two parties evolved in the same direction. One of the main purposes of this study is to illuminate the differences, as well as the similarities between the two main branches of the French Left. Inherent to this study, also, is a desire to demonstrate the difficulty experienced by the Socialist and Communist Parties in reconciling their theoretical ideals with contemporary practical exigencies. Recently, these two parties have been faced with the option of being flexible and compromising in order to reach political power, or of sacrificing power for ideological purity. The Communists appear to have opted for the latter. This is not the first time the Socialist and Communist Party leaderships have faced this dilemma. During the 20th century, the two Parties have

already participated in two predominantly Leftist governments: the Front Populaire (1936-1939) and the postwar government (1944-1947). The factors influencing governmental decisions in those days are certainly different from those of today, but would some of the results be the same, at least in the area of defense? The present study attempts to answer this question by treating as completely as possible, on the one hand, the defense decisions made by former Leftist ministers and, on the other hand, the defense plans elaborated in the Common Program and in Leftist party-leader pronouncements.

In order to minimize the cultural bias inherent to any study of foreign phenomena, facts for this study have been drawn from original French source material whenever available. There does not yet exist a comprehensive survey of French Leftist defense policy, but there are a number of particularly astute interpreters of French policy living today in France and the United States. This study makes extensive reference to their works, as well as to the private opinions of senior French and Allied military personnel interviewed regarding particular topics of interest.

I. ROOTS OF FRENCH SOCIALISM (1789-1864)

A. PHILOSOPHICAL ORIGINS

France in the 17th century was in theory an absolutist state: one king, one faith, one law.¹ Authoritarianism, censorship and intolerance were its primary characteristics. The Church had a monopoly on thought: apart from its strictly religious monopoly on faith, it also controlled the schools and censored the press. Neither the person of the King nor the institution of the Church could ever become the object of direct criticism; disparaging remarks were tolerated only when they were worded in a sufficiently abstract or indirect manner. Frenchmen, therefore, who wished to criticize their society had to become early masters in the art of philosophizing: constantly phrasing their criticism in lofty, idyllic terms of that which could be, and not of that which should be.

With the revolutionary discoveries in science during the late 17th and early 18th centuries, a new wave of thought washed over Europe. There was a sudden explosion of faith in the wisdom of science and in the possibility of explaining social phenomena through the objective, scientific laws of the physical world.

The only foundation of faith in the natural sciences is the principle, that the general laws, known or unknown, which regulate the phenomena of the universe, are regular and constant; and why should this principle, applicable

to the other operations of nature, be less true when applied to the development of the intellectual and moral faculties of man? (De Condorcet)²

A spirit of reason was beginning to take the place of traditional, religious faith. Replacing the fundamental principle that Man is naturally sinful and that only God is perfect, the new school of thought espoused the perfectibility of Man instead³: Man is inherently good; given free access to the truth, he will make rational, objective decisions; progress is an inevitable law of human development once the artificial (social and political) roadblocks are cleared away.⁴

Montesquieu, with his objective analysis of the French laws and customs of his time, was one of the originators of the Enlightenment movement in France.⁵ Of greater significance to the development of French socialism, however, are the philosophies of Voltaire and Rousseau.

When Voltaire travelled to Great Britain in 1726, he was astounded by the prevailing ideas of liberty and reform. Returning to France, he was convinced that once the new ideas were explained to the King and his councilors, changes would be made for the betterment of all of French society. (The King would be merely "enlightened." In this original stage, there was absolutely no desire for the replacement of the monarchy by some other form of government.)⁶ Voltaire was extremely successful in popularizing the new ideas in French society, for he was a favorite literary figure and able to attack society and politics in his witty poems and plays.

But once the Enlightenment ideas fell firmly into French hands, a metamorphosis occurred: the school of objective, rational thought was suddenly transformed into a body of abstract syllogisms. Charles Mallet has described this strictly French phenomenon with invaluable insight:

The classical spirit with its finish, its certificability, its limitations, already dominant in France, set its stamp on the new philosophy...A passion for philosophical discussion took hold of the educated world, and carried them past the facts which they ought to have noticed, to theories which seemed more distant and consequently more profound. All alike began...to enquire into the meaning of many things, the current interpretation of which they had determined no longer to accept; while the necessity, from which all Frenchmen suffer, of never being dull, encouraged superficiality in the new search for truth and checked the close study of history, which alone could have avoided error...

As men learned how clear and simple were the laws of physical nature, they determined that there must be other laws of nature, to explain society and politics; and finding this theory lamentably contradicted by the confusion of institutions and abuses round them,...these dreamers fell back upon ideals of natural religion and natural law. Far aloof themselves from actual politics,...dissatisfied with their own political customs, but disdaining to study [the past], they proceeded to formulate, by the aid of pure reason, theories which would...fit in with some apparently more simple and scientific formula of life. These [were] politics of the imagination, and the political world in France found itself presently divided into two camps,...those who governed,...those who discoursed. A society devoted to letters and to conversation embraced and disseminated the speculative literature...and thus the great literary men of the eighteenth century became in France...the fountains of political inspiration, and the real leaders of public thought.⁷

B. ROUSSEAU AND THE GENESIS OF FRENCH SOCIALISM

The philosophical writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau are among the most important influences on the development of French political thought and the birth of a French socialist movement.

1. Equality

It was Rousseau's idea of Equality that kindled the fires of hope in the hearts of the poor in 18th century France. In 1789 the bourgeoisie promised Equality as they solicited the support of the working class for the cause of the Revolution. (Gordon Wright maintains that, even though illiteracy was between 20 and 95% of all male Frenchmen at the time, there is substantial evidence that by 1789 the most thoughtful men of France - literate or not - had been exposed to Rousseau's ideas; for, these had become a mood or "temper" of the time.)⁸

Rousseau believed that all men are born free and equal.⁹ In their natural state, men are independent and indifferent towards each other. Once man enters society, he becomes dependent on others and this means he no longer is their equal. Therefore, in order to restore man's basic equality, there must be a Law that replaces each man's individual will; in this way, no one will be able to be anyone else's master. By means of this impersonal Law, relations between people will be as relations between things; this impersonal structure allows for the individual to retain his liberty and dignity in society. In order to accomplish this, each member of society must give himself and his rights totally to all the community. And since each person gives himself entirely, everyone is equal. If everyone is equal, then no one has any reason to seek advantage over anyone else. Everyone gives all his rights and liberties into a

common reservoir, and society redistributes the rights equally among all in such a way that everyone remains equal.

This new "social contract" is perfect, for by giving up oneself to everyone, one has given oneself to no one. (Significant, however, is Rousseau's further stipulation that if ever the contract is violated, then the individual immediately takes back his natural rights and his natural liberty. This belief has lead to the justification for revolution and the overthrow of French governments.)

The supreme importance placed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau on both the equality and freedom of the individual have created a serious dilemma in the political culture of France. As one jealously guards one's equality above all else, suspicion of another's actions prevails: is he trying to do something that will rob me of my equality? There are few if any important special interest groups in French society, for they are regarded with suspicion by all, they are viewed as mechanisms for furthering someone else's rights, to the detriment of one's own.¹⁰ There is little enthusiasm for collaborative action or community cohesion in France. One seeks, purely and simply, to be free and independent.

On the one hand, a Frenchman considers a decentralized governmental system the best way to ensure his independence. He believes that, if governmental power is subdivided into a myriad of local-level governments, no one person or institution can obtain a monopoly of power or influence. If one looks at the organizational structure of the French government

today, one will see a central government located in Paris, but also a perfect hierarchy of départementale and municipal-level government representatives. In theory, the French government appears to be decentralized. But one must not be deceived by appearances.

For, on the other hand, a Frenchman distrusts the political middle-men who stand between him and the central government in Paris. Under the various constitutions of the French Republic, the government elected by the people governs with the will of the people. The existence of middle-men appears to only enhance the likelihood of distortion and corruption. Thus a tightly centralized form of authoritarian government (such as Napoleon's First Empire or de Gaulle's Fifth Republic) seems to be the best means of ensuring no one receives special or preferential treatment.

In short, a Frenchman distrusts all governmental arrangements of power, be it centralized or decentralized, for neither will unconditionally guarantee his individual freedom and independence.

2. The General Will

What was the impersonal Law referred to above? It is the "general will" - the supreme authority of the community.¹¹ It is the will of the whole community, not just a body of legislators. There is no separation of power; the people are the state. The general will treats all men equally - when it does not, then it has been perverted and is no longer the general will. (There is therefore nothing

sacred about a particular group of legislators or cabinet ministers; when they cease to express the "general will", they are to be replaced. Here is, then, yet another aspect of Rousseau's philosophy which has justified the swift, frequent and easy toppling of successive governments in France.)

Rousseau's definition of the General Will was not exhaustive, however. (Political scientist George Sabine believes that Rousseau never envisaged a state on a national scale.)¹² The idea therefore fell subject to further interpretation by post-revolutionary social reformers who sought to use it as part of their blueprint for building a better society.

The nascent French communist movement was one such radical group. Using a very interesting interpretation of Rousseau's nebulous General Will and verbally espousing the principles of equality and freedom, the French Communist Party (PCF) has been able to claim it is a national party, one that is philosophically rooted in the ideals of the French Enlightenment. For, according to the communist interpretation,¹³ the General Will is the spirit that will inspire all men in the way they should properly govern themselves - that is, provided they are rightly and fully informed, and no distorting factors exist to mislead them. In order for right decisions to be made, there must be social, economic and political equality. But until those right conditions prevail, it could be that the General Will might be temporarily embodied in a minority of men (a vanguard) who know

what all men would desire if they could just be freed from the encumbering social distortions created by evil institutions. Therefore, it would be the duty of such a vanguard to seize and hold power, if necessary in spite of the majority, and make men happy and virtuous by setting up new institutions and educating the people. Rousseau lends credence to this interpretation by his statement that

Whoever refuses to obey the general will shall be compelled to do so by the whole body. This means nothing less than that he will be forced to be free.¹⁴

(This interpretation of Rousseau's philosophy was ultimately combined with Marxism to form a unique brand of communism in France today.)

C. SOCIETY AND THE ECONOMY

As a state, France ranks as one of the oldest. A central ruler has governed France, either directly or indirectly, ever since 987 A.D., and most of the nation's racial and cultural mixing was completed by 1000 A.D. As a result, by the 18th century France had a firmly established societal structure which - by virtue of age and tradition - appeared impervious to any significant modification. By 1750, France had become the most populous nation of Western Europe (22 million) and society consisted of an omnipotent king surrounded by a court of powerless but hereditary nobles; a bourgeois class flourishing from foreign trade and industrial production; and finally, a mass of peasants comprising, along with the bourgeoisie, 98% of the population.¹⁵

Although the feudal system had been abolished by the monarchy and all real power had been transferred to the central figure of the king, French society remained a collection of different classes, hierarchically arranged and sharply delineated by specific sets of ranks, rules and privileges. The nobility, numbering some 140,000 persons, held claims on one-fifth of all French land. These persons were exempt from paying any taxes. And, in addition, they were assured a predominant position in society by the king: only they would be permitted into the highest ranks of the Army and the Church. The Church owned another fifth of all French land and gleaned a comfortable existence from the tithes and offerings exacted from the poor. The bourgeoisie (middle class) had become highly organized into corporations and craft guilds, in which one often had to be the son of a master in order to succeed. This, the wealthiest class in the 18th century French society, chafed under the inability to accede to the highest ranks of privilege and prestige: that of the noble aristocracy.¹⁶ Noted historian Gordon Wright points out that this was not a capitalistic middle class; they had no desire to innovate or expand; rather they sought the socially unattainable.¹⁷ Their social dissatisfaction was only intensified by the fact that the king, unable to persuade his noble entourage to part with any of its wealth, accepted substantial loans from the bourgeoisie in an effort to regulate the national debt (which had burgeoned out of all control as a result of the expansionist wars of Louis XIV and the intervention in the American Revolution).

The bourgeoisie managed to evade taxation almost as effectively as the nobles, so the brunt of the tax burden fell ponderously onto the shoulders of the peasants. These latter, although permitted to buy land, were seldom able to afford a piece large enough to assure them any degree of self-sufficiency. They hired themselves out, selling their labor to noblemen on a 50-50 profit split basis. The fundamental difference was, of course, the nobleman's money was clear profit whereas the peasant forfeited four-fifths of his income to taxes of all kinds. This class, on the eve of the French revolution, was completely devoid of any political understanding, conscious only of its own misery, hopelessness and isolation from the privileged ranks of society.¹⁸ They had lost the paternal care of their feudal overlords when they had been made free men; this was the atomistic freedom of a small boat left alone on the devouring waves of a raging sea.

D. THE REVOLUTION

In 1789 France was emerging from a painful decade of economic recession. Food prices had doubled; unemployment was at 50% in the major cities; one-fifth of the Parisian populace was on a relief roll of some kind. Those who were the first to become vocally disgruntled and revolutionary were not the politically ignorant poor, but rather the small shopkeepers and the petty bourgeoisie.¹⁹ The King suddenly lost support from all sides. The nobles felt threatened by his moves to abolish their fiscal privileges. The bourgeoisie

resented the continued exclusion from the highest rank of society. The soldiers in the Gardes Francaises in Paris, refusing to suppress the mobs demonstrating for food, mutinied against their officers and fraternized with the citizens. The masses were encouraged by the bourgeoisie to join and swell the ranks of this uprising against the established order. Most importantly, they had been spurred into action by the ethereal promises of Equality and Freedom.

Just before the outbreak of the revolution, the King had called for a landmark meeting of the Etats-Généraux (States General). Thus, although the bastions of the old order (e.g. the prison of the Bastille) soon came under the control of the people, there was a national assembly in place that could have begun building a new order. But the predominately middle-class elected officials had no practical experience in governing, and herein lies one of the first tragic weaknesses of the Revolution. The old order had been destroyed to the cries of "sovereignty to the people" and "the natural rights of Man"; but the Assembly had no idea as to how these principles should be translated into a new societal and governmental order. Thus, for lack of any experienced political leaders or any generally accepted plan for the future (the elected officials had not yet learned the sophisticated political art of compromise), the government of France fell into the now-benevolent, now-maleficent hands of the various interpreters of the elusive sacred principles: Equality and Freedom.²⁰

E. POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES

By 1791 the majority of Frenchmen were weary with the disruption and disorganization of the Revolution. They thought it was time for the chaos to end, for in their eyes the worst injustices had been corrected.²¹ For the bourgeoisie: class barriers had been broken. (Equality had indeed been attained for the propertied: everyone who owned land and paid taxes in excess of a specified amount was accorded the right to vote). As for the agricultural poor, they had been given land and were therefore ready to see the Revolution end. They joined the ranks of the majority in asking for a reinstatement of the King and a beginning to life according to the conditions of the new order. A dissatisfied minority remained however: the vocal poor in the cities. These people had obtained virtually nothing from the Revolution and they demanded that the Revolution continue, for it had not yet gone far enough. Herein lie the seeds of the French proletarian class and the origins of the French social reformist movement.

The jarring disparity between the "have" and "have-nots" in French society is a phenomenon which persists up to the present day and continues to fuel socialist and communist political movements. The disparity is more than just a figment of the lower or working-class imagination. In France today five percent of French society owns 40% of the nation's wealth; another ten percent owns another 30%; and 85% of the French population has to share the remaining 30%.²² The

propertied class still predominates in France: in politics, society and education. Upward mobility is slow and awkward. According to Henry Ehrmann in his 1976 book on French society and politics, "the bourgeoisie accepts in its ranks only those whom it considers worthy, those who resemble its own sons and who have the same mentality."²³

F. THE UTOPIAN SOCIALISTS

During the first half of the 19th century, as France began to industrialize, a number of French thinkers focused their attention on the plight of the burgeoning French proletariat, in large part an offspring of the 18th century class of urban poor. This was the era of industrialization and growing working classes throughout Europe. French aristocrats were afraid of the revolutionary potential of the French workers. The bourgeoisie was therefore unopposed in its oppressive treatment of the industrial working class.²⁴ There were some Frenchmen who deplored the current condition of French society, but they unfortunately were "reformers of the heart rather than the head."²⁵ Most of these Utopian Socialists decided that since the conditions prevalent in their actual surroundings did not coincide with that which ought to be, according to the inviolable laws of reason, they should create an entirely new society rather than try to reform the present one.²⁶

An example of a Utopian Socialist society can be found in the philosophy of the Count of St. Simon. St. Simon

believed progress could be achieved by applying the principles of rational science to the management of social problems.²⁷ The hierarchical pyramid of society should be rearranged so that those who contribute the most to society (i.e. the workers - les industriels) receive its greatest rewards.²⁸ Gordon Wright explains that St. Simon's pyramid was to be guided by an elite of engineers and entrepreneurs, and all classes would work for the common welfare.²⁹ St. Simon, however, never said how this was to be accomplished,³⁰ and as a result, the tiny St. Simonian movement survived its founder's death by only a few years. Later rulers of France (e.g. Louis Napoleon) were to remember St. Simon's ideas of productivity and welfare and try to apply them. But French workers were not convinced of the desirability of being led by a group of enlightened capitalists; besides, St. Simon's utopia did not appear to include any guarantees of liberty or equality for the individual.³¹

Another French Utopian Socialist was Charles Fourier. Like St. Simon, Fourier's ideal society was based on the idea of class collaboration, but without a managerial elite. According to Fourier, industrial production would be decentralized, creating many small communities in which the conditions of life would be so pleasant, everyone would "rise at three in the morning and...rush to work with passionate enthusiasm."³² For, with a population consisting of two people from each of the 810 different kinds of temperament Fourier believed to exist, each community would be a

harmonious "free and voluntary association of capital, labor, and talent."³³ As nice as this might have sounded to Fourier, French workers would have none of it.

One figure who did succeed in winning the support of the French proletariat in the mid-19th century was Louis Blanc. An advocate of decentralized and nationalized industry, Blanc maintained that the competitive system of free enterprise worked to the detriment of all by its wastefulness and its continual crises.³⁴ He proposed, therefore, the creation of a society based on the principle of the producer's cooperative. The government would organize national workshops within the main industries; each workshop would be responsible for delegating tasks and regulating production in the best interests of the working class.³⁵ Blanc also proposed a system whereby the government would loan workshops the capital with which the workers might eventually take over the ownership of their factory.³⁶ (Louis Blanc soared to a position of national preeminence on the back of the short-lived proletarian revolution of 1848. He succeeded in organizing a brief experiment with national workshops in France, but abuse of the system by workers and lack of commitment to the project by the other ministers of the provisional government of France facilitated a conservative victory at the polls just two months later and the abolition of the workshops.)³⁷

II. THE NASCENT MOVEMENT (1864-1920)

The well-meaning but ineffectual Utopian Socialists were left behind as French social reformism moved into the latter half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. The influences of this period were crucial in transforming the French social reformist movement into one of French socialism: advocating change by revolution. Blanqui, Proudhon, Marx, Guesde, Jaurès, Dreyfus, Lenin and Wilson; all these names evoke important stages in the birth of the modern French socialist movement.

A. FIRST INTERNATIONAL

In 1864, as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were founding the First International in London, there was a delegation of French workers there to help them. The First International was organized "to afford a central medium of communication and cooperation for those organizations that seek the protection, advancement and complete emancipation of the working class."¹ Napoleon III was ruling France at this time and making a certain number of labor reforms.² Workers in France had been denied the right to strike or to form unions ever since the days of the Revolution, when these interdictions were deemed to be in the best interests of "liberty." The first major outbreaks of worker protest occurred in France in the early 1830s, as factories had sprung up, wages

had dwindled and population growth had outstripped the food supply. These were effectively put down, however, and it wasn't until 1841 that the government outlawed the employment of children under eight and shortened the hours for those under sixteen. The ultimate failure of the 1848 revolution was a bitter disappointment for all who had placed their hopes of social reform in the person of Louis Blanc. It was only with the advent of Napoleon III and the Second Empire that a slow, but progressive stream of labor reforms began. In 1862 he sent a delegation of French workers to the London Exposition to observe English labor conditions; in 1863 he established a credit organization to finance cooperatives; and in 1864 he granted workers the right to strike. In 1868 he let it be known that he would tolerate the formation of labor unions. French workers had found a certain degree of proletarian class-consciousness by 1870 and they constituted the largest branch of the First International. (It should be noted, however, that at this time workers made up less than half of the French population; peasants and agriculture still formed the mass base of French society.)³

B. PARIS COMMUNE

The first dramatic episode in modern French socialist history occurred in 1870-1871: the defeat of Napoleon III during the Franco-Prussian War, and the subsequent republican refusal to surrender to the Germans. When the French

people could hold out no longer, an armistice was signed and elections held. France wanted peace and by now republicans were considered warmongers; as a result only 200 republicans were voted into the new government, versus 400 monarchists.⁴ When some of the major cities, including Paris, still refused to accept the surrender and the harsh peace terms, civil war broke out. Paris was organized into a self-governing "Commune" with 80 elected officials at its head. Approximately two-thirds of these were Jacobins or Blanquists, that is, intensely patriotic, anti-clerical, egalitarian and desirous of a strong, centralized dictatorship like that of 1793. The other third consisted of self-proclaimed socialists, mainly Proudhonians, favoring a decentralized federal system.^{5*}

Marx called the Commune the first proletarian dictatorship in history and Lenin picked up the same theme later on.⁶ When the army of the Third Republic was sent in to crush the Commune, Marx interpreted the action as a bourgeois suppression of a Parisian social reformist movement. Whether or not

*[Perhaps a few clarifications should be made at this point. Jacobinism was the idea that there is a single "will of the people" and that when the people express this general will by choosing someone to represent them, this representative is justified in ruling against all opposition. Such dictatorship is therefore a legitimate form of direct democracy. Napoleon I's accession to power by plebescite was justified by this Jacobin logic.⁷ August Blanqui was an advocate of direct revolutionary action. No plans were deemed necessary for social reform; one need only seize control of the state and sweep away all the society's barriers to freedom and education; everyone would then be equal and enlightened. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon called himself an anarchist. He said that workers must rely on themselves and use economic tactics to gain power. He maintained that power always corrupted those who hold it; therefore there must be a "federalist" dispersion of power and property so that no one group can dominate the others.⁸ In short, Proudhon wanted to eliminate political power without using political means.⁹]

the Communards were, in fact, members of the working class (and Gordon Wright says they were from a broad cross-section of classes)¹⁰, their violent demise at the hands of the Republican army signaled the failure of Blanquism and Proudhonism for the social reformers of late 19th-century France.¹¹ These latter now needed something new to believe in, and Marxism became that "something."

C. GUESDIST MARXISM

Jules Guesde was a Proudhonian radical, exiled from France for writing in support of the Commune.¹² While in exile he met Karl Marx and gradually became a follower of the new "scientific" socialism (i.e. a socialism based on economics, not vague concepts of "general will," etc.). After returning to France, he worked three years to start a proletarian party and finally, in 1879, the Third Workers' Congress in Marseilles proclaimed itself in favor of the conquest of the State and collectivization of property by political action. The program for the new Socialist Workers' Party of France (PTSF) was drawn up the next year in London by Guesde, Marx and Engels.¹² The program was one of Marx's "minimum programs" (i.e. working for immediate reforms rather than resorting to open revolution).¹³ After the elections of 1881, however, in which the Socialists received a meager 60,000 votes, some members of the PTSF voiced their displeasure with the party's program. They said the party should be seeking partial reforms; the program drawn up by Guesde and Marx was "born in [the] Thames

fogs,...essentially anti-French...and too inflexible to be applied countrywide."¹⁴ At the party congress the next year, Guesde was condemned as anti-French, unrealistic and dictatorial; and the majority of the party followed Paul Brousse to found the Federation of Socialist Workers of France (FTSF). The importance of this split is in its manifestation of what Robert Wohl calls the French Socialists' deeply engrained aversion to foreign revolutionary doctrines, an insistence on ideological homogeneity and a centralized party organization.¹⁵ (He hints that this aversion has since been seen again, in the French Communist Party).

Guesde was undaunted, however, and throughout the 1880s he continued his drive for an overthrow of the bourgeoisie. Personally, he believed this could only be accomplished by violent revolution. Every means was to be used toward that end: the struggle for reform would heighten the workers' class consciousness and electoral campaigns would be a forum for socialist ideas. (By 1893, however, his ploy of organizing workers and trying to win public office had irreversibly influenced the party: his party, the Parti ouvrière française, moved toward reformism.)¹⁶ He believed that revolution was inevitable and imminent. He hoped that world revolution might result from the 1885 Russo-British "progressive" war in Afghanistan: defeat for either one of the two great reactionary powers would certainly result in domestic revolution; this would divert reactionary aid away from revolutions in other countries and these would thus be

victorious. He even wrote a poem on the "fruitfulness" of war:

Flow, flow, blood of the soldier
Blood of the Czar or the Queen
Run in streams or in fountains.
This time, Humanity
Will benefit from the fruits of war.¹⁷

(Guesde's enthusiasm for party discipline, violent revolution and his belief in international revolution stemming from war is assessed by some analysts as being the precursor of Bolshevism.)¹⁸

D. JAURESSIAN SOCIALISM

The final decade of the 19th century saw the creation of the Second International (1889) and the successful election in 1893 of 48 French socialists to the national Parliament. This political breakthrough was attenuated somewhat by the fact that 18 of the delegates came from four different socialist parties, and the remaining 30 were Independent socialists.¹⁹ Of great significance among the latter, however, was Jean Jaurès. Jaurès had become a socialist just the year before the election and was the product of a younger generation than that of Guesde, who had known first-hand the repression of the Commune experiment. Jaurès had grown up with democracy and the republic. Whereas he agreed with Guedse's idea that there should be a "univeral socialism" (i.e. since capitalism is universal, socialism should be also), he felt that it needed to be "adapted to our political and economic conditions, to the traditions, ideas and spirit of our country."²⁰ Just as the French people are distinct

within the human race, so must be their brand of socialism within the international socialist movement. The socialism Jaurès dreamed of had its roots in French idealism - not German materialism.²¹

At this point, especial attention must be paid to the unique philosophy of this extraordinary statesman. As he strove to unite all French socialists into one party and carefully choose a middle road between revolution and reform, Jean Jaurès proved to be the single most important figure in French socialism for more than half a century. Robert Wohl has explained Jauressianism as follows:

Should a Socialist participate in a bourgeois government in order to save Republican liberties? Jaurès answered in the affirmative: the Socialists were duty-bound to march alongside bourgeois defenders of the Republic; the proletariat would be responsible if the bourgeoisie committed an injustice that the working class might have prevented.²²

Socialism was to be not the negation but the completion of the bourgeois Republic, the extension of the Rights of Man from the political to the economic and social spheres. This veneration for the Republic and democracy shaped Jaurès's attitude toward revolution and reform... Socialism was necessarily revolutionary. That revolution was the final goal must never be lost from view. Simple, day-to-day trade unionism was not enough. At the same time, Jaurès thought reforms were a means to revolution. They brought closer the final collapse of the old order... Though he never ruled out the possibility of a violent revolution, Jaurès clearly thought that it would be unnecessary and regrettable...

Jaurès's Socialism [embraced] moral idealism. Though fully aware of the material forces determining man's existence, Jaurès believed in the ability of men to shape their fate. For him...idealism and materialism were... complementary. Socialism was not only inevitable...it was also just. The victory of Socialism would thus not be the victory of a single class...it would be the victory of Humanity and Justice.²³

The Jaurèsian spirit of moderation and constant quest for party unity lived on after Jaurès's death in the person of Léon Blum, the next leader of the French socialist party. And even the future first General Secretary of the French Communist Party, LO. Frossard, was to write in 1943:

I did not discover the doctrine right away. Jaurès flooded me with light. I was captured forever by the ideal he erected high up in the sky like a wonderful triumphal arch.²⁴

E. DREYFUS AFFAIR

In France, there is a curious love-hate relationship between the Army and the French political Left. The Army is a vestige of the old aristocratic order where, traditionally, all officers were drawn from the noble and upper classes of French society. In the 19th century, Army officers, many conservative and pro-clerical, were not especially fond of the Republic; many, in fact, would have preferred a return to the old, more distinctive, hierarchical order of the monarchy. But it is important to note that throughout the Revolution and the 19th century, the Army was able to remain remarkably apolitical. Its duty was to serve the government of France, whatever form it took. This is not as comfortable for the French Left as it might seem. The French Left, then and now, sees a strange duality in the Army's character. On the one hand, the Left regards the Army as the defender of the Republic and the ideals of the French Revolution. The French military demonstrated its loyalty to the French government during the Revolution by

fighting off foreign, reactionary forces attempting to restore the Bourbons to power in France; and the Army fought valiantly to defend France against the Germans in the Franco-Prussian War of 1871 and served proudly as the nation's instrument of revenge (revanche) in the late 19th century. On the other hand, the Army is viewed as the protector of the status quo and the tool of the French bourgeoisie in the latter's desire to suppress any socialist attempts to rekindle the spirit of revolution in France in order to obtain long-overdue improvements in the condition of the French proletariat. This role of the Army was abundantly demonstrated in 1870 in the government's military repression of the Commune.

In the following discussion of the Dreyfus affair of the 1890s, one must be careful to note that the singular polarity which developed in French society over the Dreyfus issue was not one of Left versus Right, but rather Republicanism versus Nationalism, justice versus patriotism.²⁵ These terms will be clarified during the course of the following discussion.

In 1894, Alfred Dreyfus, a young Jewish officer of the French General Staff, was charged and convicted for giving national defense secrets to the Germans. Initially everyone was impressed with how swiftly and efficiently the Army had dealt with the traitor. Even Jaurès said at the time that if Dreyfus had not been a bourgeois and an officer, he would have been shot instead of merely imprisoned.²⁶ But as the years passed and more facts became available, it became increasingly apparent that a terrible error had been made:

Dreyfus might be innocent. Prevailing anti-Semitic and middle-class elements in French society, however, joined with the Army in resisting public demands for a retrial. If there had been a miscarriage of justice, the affair would reflect scandalously on the integrity of the nation's military, seen by the Nationalists as "the shield and protector of the nation."²⁷ Furthermore, they declared it was the Republicans' aim to "break down the nation's faith in the Army, reveal its military secrets and, when defenseless, open its gates to the enemy [Germany]."²⁸ Barbara Tuchman describes the state of French society at this time in the following way:

In political life the nation was at odds with itself, galled from within by the unreconciled, unsubdued adherents of the ancien régime and Second Empire, oppressed from without by the superior strength of Germany and the sense of unfinished war between them, hankering for revanche...²⁹

In the light of the Dreyfus scandal, the Army, the Church, the anti-Semites, the anti-Republican groups all joined in a common Nationalistic, patriotic front to save the honor of the Army and the integrity of all that symbolized the old order.³⁰

The storm of Republican protest was not to be quieted. Republicans were all those who "saw France as the fount of liberty,...the teacher of reason, the codifier of laws..."³¹ They believed that anyone who would knowingly allow France to commit an act of injustice against one of its citizens must be found, tried and condemned, in order to "cleanse the honor of the Republic"³² and restore the people's faith

in the sacred principles of the French Revolution. The patriotism of the Republicans was questioned by the Nationalists, for included in the Republican camp were Jews, Socialists and other "Internationalists."³³ Gordon Wright maintains that many Socialists never came out openly in support of Dreyfus,³⁴ but the fact remains that Jean Jaurès saw the polarization of French society as an opportunity to associate the French Left with the defense of Republican ideals of justice, honesty and fairness for the individual citizen. Barbara Tuchman writes that

Class hatred was so rooted in Socialist tradition that in order to rally the Left in the fight for justice it was necessary to de-class Dreyfus. "He is no longer an officer nor a bourgeois," Jaurès wrote..."He is simply a living witness to the crimes of Authority...He is nothing less than mankind itself."³⁵

Socialism henceforth became more than a class movement; it became France's vanguard of democracy.³⁶

When Dreyfus was finally acquitted of all charges at the end of the 1890s and the injustices of the Army and the Right revealed, a wave of antimilitarism swept through the triumphant Left. The Army in its contemporary form was considered an enemy of the Republic and the people, a machine of repression and selfishness. As a Republican government took office in 1899, measures were undertaken to republicanize the officer corps. A governmental spy network was set up to check on the attitudes of all officers and the promotion system was placed in the hands of the government's minister of war. Thus, by 1914, the Army high command was no longer a rightist-conservative stronghold of reaction.³⁷ (Note the example of the

Republican, General Joffre: Commander-in-Chief of the Army, 1911-1916.)³⁸

In actuality, the French army of the 1890s was not a powerful institution. Ever since the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, inactivity, slow promotions and low pay had been plaguing the morale of the nation's military. And after the humiliation of the Dreyfus affair, applications to the elite academy of St. Cyr dropped by fifty percent and many officers either retired or resigned their commissions.³⁹

By the turn of the century, revanchist hopes of a war with Germany had subsided and France had decided to seek security in an alliance with Russia. French socialist leaders, however, denounced the Franco-Russian military alliance of 1899 as an alliance with the very heart of Reaction. They had been watching the German socialist movement grow into the largest Marxian party in Europe and they hoped for reconciliation with Germany in order to realize the utopian peaceful coexistence of all the proletarian states of Europe.⁴⁰ Thus, it was in a spirit of antimilitarism, internationalism and pacifism that the French socialists crossed into the 20th century.

F. SECTION FRANCAISE DE L'INTERNATIONALE OUVRIÈRE

By 1904, the five socialist parties in France had come to agree with Jean Jaurès that if the movement were to have any effect in reforming society and the economy, then it must be unified. Jules Guesde and Jean Jaurès therefore went before the 1904 Congress of the Second International

in Amsterdam to plead their respective cases for leadership in the new French party. Jules Guesde, advocating a party of class struggle and revolution, was made the founder of the French Section of the Workers' International (SFIO). In 1905, however, as unification was actually taking place at the Congress of Unity in Paris, it was the influence of Jaurès and his spirit of compromise and reform that truly led the new party. (This Jauressian trend has been explained in part by Ronald Tiersky. He maintains that the leading theoreticians of the Second International were stunned by the failure of the 1905 Russian revolution, and that they consequently spent the next decade saying that proletarian democracy would be reached by social and economic reform - a process of making bourgeois democracy "honest."⁴¹) Refusing the Guesdist model of a strong, centralized party organization, the SFIO adopted a federal organization in which each federation wrote its own statutes, selected its own officers and thus exercised a large degree of local autonomy. Jaurès (editor of the party's paper in Paris, L'Humanité) insisted that this be "a party of free discussion and free criticism," with a press open to all opinions.⁴² During the pre-World War I period, the SFIO never became a mass or worker-based party. (Although this was an era of industrial expansion in France, the proletariat comprised only 39% of the nation's work force by 1914 and party membership reached only 93,000 as compared with one million members in the German Socialist party.)⁴³ Party members came mainly from Paris, the

heavily-industrialized Franco-Belgian border area and the agricultural south. But the electorate were primarily small landowners, businessmen, government employees and professional men.⁴⁴ They were led by lawyers and professors, men from bourgeois and intellectual backgrounds (as were the leaders of the Second International at this time).⁴⁵ There was no particular cult of the working class. The SFIO merely embraced the ideals of the Republic and sought to improve relations between bourgeoisie and the workers. Under the influence of Jaurès, French socialism became a constitutional party, trying to attract bourgeois support for the socialist cause. When the German Socialists (dogmatic adherents to Marxism) tried to dissuade the French Socialists from participating in government, Jaurès argued that what was good for the German Socialists was not necessarily good for other national groups. In France the party could find some really dependable allies among the progressive bourgeoisie, and together they could get control of parliament and of the state itself. In Germany it was very possible that a different strategy would be quite proper.⁴⁶

As one examines the significant events of the first fourteen years of the 20th century, the year 1905 once again comes to the fore. The French nation, already armed with an assurance of aid from Russia, had just signed a secret entente with the British; the fear of an aggressive Germany still ran high in the hearts of Frenchmen. When Emperor Wilhelm II visited Tangiers in 1905 and hailed the independence of

Morocco in spite of the Franco-British Entente which gave France a free hand in that country, the French nation felt itself on the brink of war. Although the ultimate test of strength was averted by the dismissal of the warmongering Foreign Minister Delcassé, tensions within France began to rise geometrically, and continued to do so until the actual outbreak of war in 1914. There was a growing sense of urgency for preparations to defend France against a German attack; the standing army was strengthened by an extension of military service from two to three years.

The Socialists, however, continued to pursue their internationalist hopes for a reconciliation between France and Germany. The revolution seemed imminent, as French labor was voicing its discontent as never before: a general strike in 1909 had been ruthlessly subdued by army troops.⁴⁷ SFIO antimilitarist sentiments were evident during the voting of the three-year military service law; Socialist opposition, however, was not able to prevent its ultimate passage.⁴⁸ Concerning the Socialist stand on patriotism and defense of the homeland, Jaurès spoke for the majority of the SFIO when he said it was the "imperious duty" of workers to join the nation's fight against any aggressor to save her independence; but he firmly added that this duty applied only in the case of a defensive war. In other words, Socialists were supposed to try to prevent war at all costs, even if it meant general strikes and insurrections in order to force arbitration and forestall an outbreak of hostilities. And if France were to

wage an aggressive war? Jaurès was unmistakably clear: Socialists must revolt.⁴⁹

G. WORLD WAR I

On July 28, 1914, Austria declared war on Serbia. French Socialists had met in Paris just two weeks before to discuss the possibility of calling a universal general strike of the European working class. They soon agreed, however, that the French movement was too weak to lead the strike and, since the German Socialists were both unable and unwilling to participate in such an action, the idea must be abandoned.⁵⁰ Therefore it was in a spirit of hopelessness that the Socialists of France, Austria and Germany met in Brussels the day after Austria's declaration of war. Too weak to combat the mounting chauvinism in their respective countries, the leaders of the three parties could only embrace and promise rallies and demonstrations in an effort to avert the impending holocaust.⁵¹ Two days later Germany declared a state of "imminent danger of war" and that night, as France was formulating its response, Jean Jaurès was assassinated. Thus, left without a leader and faced with the almost certain advent of a defensive war, the SFIO rallied to President Poincaré's call for a "sacred union" of all the sons of France "in a common indignation against the aggressor, and in a common patriotic faith."⁵² Four days after the assassination of Jaurès, the SFIO was voting unanimously in favor of the war credits requested by the President of the Republic. A

government pre-war plan to preventively arrest 1000 trade union and extreme-leftist leaders in the event of war was cancelled as unnecessary.⁵³ Before the end of the month two Socialists had entered the French cabinet, temporarily abrogating the party principle that Socialists should not participate in the cabinets of a bourgeois government.

In the opening days of the war, the nuances between reformist and revolutionary Socialists disappeared as nearly everyone became a realist. By September, Socialists were even among those on the front lines at the First Battle of the Marne.⁵⁴ In 1915, however, a handful of French revolutionary Socialists went to an international socialist conference in Zimmerwald, Switzerland, to register their opposition to the war. (The conference had been organized by the Russian Bolshevik V. Lenin and it was in large part a result of the contacts made and ideas obtained at Zimmerwald that this small French delegation later played significant roles in the founding of a French Communist Party.)⁵⁵ By 1916 many Socialists in Parliament were ready for France to surrender. Only Jules Guesde and his adherents were able to keep the "white peace advocates" from moving into open opposition to the government.⁵⁶ (Jules Guesde was a cabinet minister at the time.) By December of that year, however, the Party was equally divided over the issue of continuing the war. The Socialists made a unanimous call for the Allied governments to accept President Wilson's offer of mediation and to adopt the Wilsonian idea of "peace without victory...without

annexations or reparations."⁵⁷ But the harsh winter of 1916-1917 passed by and Socialist hopes for an early peace dwindled.

1917 was to be a crucial year in the story of the Sacred Union. In March the French government allowed three Socialists to go to Petrograd to talk with the Russian Socialists and persuade them to join in the war effort and cooperate with the new provisional government's plans for continuing the war against the Central Powers. The Russians replied that the only way to revive the morale of the Russian Army and prevent the Russians from making a separate peace was for the Allies to attend the peace conference in Stockholm in May and be willing to delineate their specific war aims. The French Socialists were extremely concerned that the Russians might sign a separate peace and leave France at the mercy of the whole German military machine; therefore, they wanted France to participate in the conference. Just as the government was deliberating the matter, however, there was an explosion of emotion and dissatisfaction that plunged the nation into a severe crisis. Workers' strikes were becoming more frequent, as they demanded higher pay and an end to the war. In May 1917 a near total strike occurred in the vital mines and munitions factories of Paris and the St. Etienne basin. Furthermore, General Nivelle's troops were refusing to go into battle. A Colonel in the field at the time described the army rebellion at its height as having "reached more than half our divisions, including even the elite corps, and

threatening the army with total disintegration."⁵⁸ Within a few days General Pétain had become Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. His main task was to rebuild the army into an effective fighting force. This he saw as impossible if there were members of the government going to a peace conference in Sweden to discuss a negotiated peace. He considered this a clear display of defection and urged that the Socialists not be issued passports for the conference, saying, "the danger of an attack by 75 German divisions is distinctly less serious than the demoralization of our army."⁵⁹ This marked the first serious crack in the Sacred Union, as the government did withhold the passports. This act was important also in that it revealed the association being made in the military mind between Socialist pacifism and troop demoralization.⁶⁰

In September 1917 the Sacred Union was officially broken as the Socialists refused to support the Painlevé government. Their withdrawal from the Union did not indicate, however, any lessening of their concern for the national defense of France. For example, when the Bolsheviks asked the French Socialists a few months later to support the new Russian peace policy, the Frenchmen replied that such a separate peace would "serve...the designs of the enemies of democracy and socialism throughout the world, by allowing them to invoke the Russian Revolution as an example of disorganization and demoralization." (Trotsky reportedly retorted that of all the socialist parties, the French were the least qualified to preach sermons to the Russians. For, the French had

voted for war credits and had been denied permission to go to Stockholm and they were themselves responsible for this humiliation because they had joined the Sacred Union.)⁶¹

By the end of the year, Clemenceau had become Prime Minister of France. He waged a ruthless campaign against pacifism and defection, not bothering to distinguish between German sympathizers and simple idealists. On December 28, the Socialist deputies in parliament demanded a revision of the war aims and the publication of secret treaties. A few days later they asked Clemenceau for passports to make a last-ditch attempt to reason with the Bolsheviks and talk them out of a separate peace. Clemenceau refused apparently because it was Christmas and morale was once again very low among the troops at the front. The Socialists continued to vote for war credits, but they also demanded in January 1918 that the government align its peace plans with Wilson's Fourteen Points.⁶² The French intervention in Russia in mid-1918 was greeted with general approval by the Socialists, many of whom felt betrayed by the treaty of Brest Litovsk. But, as intervention continued in Russia after the Armistice, it became obvious that French troops were there to put down the Bolsheviks and not German imperialism.⁶³ French Socialists began opposing the operation, claiming that the Bolsheviks were merely exercising their right to self-determination and therefore their right to revolution. The Socialists claimed that such an infringement of human rights by the French Republic was humiliating.⁶⁴ Furthermore, the

intervention was not serving the interests of France;⁶⁵
rather, it was slowing demobilization and preventing the
conclusion of a Wilsonian peace.

Before concluding this section dealing with the SFIO
during World War I, it might be valuable to study the French
Socialists' basic attitude on national defense and to contrast
it with that of the Bolsheviks, who for their part refused to
contribute to the defense of their nation. One must recognize
that although there was a split in the French Socialists dur-
ing the war, the two major factions (discounting the Zimmer-
waldian minority) wholeheartedly supported the defense effort
and merely differed on the criterion for terminating the war.
One faction maintained the enemy had to surrender uncondi-
tionally; the other wanted a negotiated peace along Wilsonian
lines as soon as the threat to France had been removed.⁶⁶
These Socialists of early 20th century France were Jauressian
in spirit: trying to balance patriotism with internationalism,
revolution with reform. In contrasting French Socialist
support for national defense and Russian refusal to do the
same, Robert Wohl explains:

If the Russians were the most revolutionary of all
socialists in their reaction to the war and the least
taken in by the appeal to Sacred Union, it was because
they of all European socialists were the most alienated
from their own government and their own society. The
French socialists, on the other hand, represented a
coalition of workers, peasants and petty bourgeois
already deeply integrated into the social, political
and cultural life of the Third Republic. The Sacred
Union showed that reality of integration...it was
impossible to persuade the French worker or peasant
that he had no stake in the survival of the nation.⁶⁷

H. WAR'S END

This was true, at least, for the generation of Frenchmen who entered the war in 1914; but they did not emerge unscathed from the five years of conflict. The war had caused a second French industrial revolution: by 1919 the primary industry of France had shifted from textiles to metallurgy, requiring greater numbers of less skilled laborers. Paris had become a major industrial center and a "Red Belt" around the capital began to take shape (i.e. large concentrations of factory workers flocked to the industries springing up in the Parisian suburbs). The ranks of the French Section of the Workers International had swelled from 93,000 in 1914 to 133,000 in 1919.⁶⁸ The psychological and economic privations of the war had taken their toll on French society.

The Socialist leaders were jubilant in the Republic's victory over imperialistic aggression. Furthermore, they placed their faith in Wilson: the man, his abilities and his principles.⁶⁹ With heightened confidence in the effectiveness and justice of the existing governmental system, they believed that a revolution by parliamentary means was possible and imminent, to be realized by the forthcoming elections of 1919. This ebullient optimism was short-lived however. A wave of strikes had frightened the majority of French society into believing that the Russian Revolution and Bolshevism were spreading to France. As a result, the elections ended with the SFIO receiving 23% of the votes, more than in 1914 but not enough to preclude its loss of one-third its seats

in Parliament.⁷⁰ The Socialist faith in parliamentary revolution had been crushed. On the heels of this political disappointment came the revelation of the Paris Peace terms and the full realization that Wilsonian idealism was a sham, weak and empty.⁷¹ This only served to reinforce the Socialists' now resurgent belief that bourgeois idealism, no matter how sincere, was simply incapable of solving the contemporary problems of the world.⁷² By the end of 1920, two-thirds of the French Socialists had decided that the SFIO, as guided by the principles of the Second International, was no longer viable in postwar France. Led by L.O. Frossard, the Party's left wing declared that a dramatic, substantive change was needed, and it proposed French membership in the new International being formed by the Bolsheviks.

III. THE INTERWAR PERIOD (1920-1939)

A. DIVISION IN THE 1920's

1. Section Francaise de l'Internationale Communiste

At 2 a.m. on December 30, 1920, the French Section of the Workers International was irrevocably cut in two. Two-thirds of the delegates to the Party Congress in Tours decided to form the French Section of the Communist International (SFIC). The remaining third departed the party congress and, as the SFIO, soon fell under the leadership of the centrist-socialist Léon Blum. How to explain this massive shift towards Bolshevism? As mentioned earlier, there was by no means spontaneous or unanimous SFIO support of the Russian Revolution, considered at the time to be disruptive to the war effort and dangerous to the defense of France. The French Socialists had known the Bolsheviks from their earlier meetings at congresses of the Second International. One of the founders of the SFIC was to later remark:

But who among us paid attention before the War to the representatives of Russian Socialism? We considered them negligible. Indeed, we stayed away from them so as not to get involved in their terrible sectarian quarrels. Hadn't Jaurès himself ordered the staff of L'Humanité not to accept their articles except in the case of absolute necessity, aware as he was from long experience that printing a line from any one of them inevitably entailed printing half a dozen annoying rectifications before the week was out.¹

These remarks emphasize how little the French Socialists of 1920 had studied the Bolshevik movement. To be sure, no

one of that era could really know or predict the future nature of the Russian socialist movement for, from 1917 until 1920, there had been strict prohibition by the French government on travel to and publication of information from Russia due to possible adverse effects on the army.² Thus, at the time the SFIC was founded, Bolshevism in France was more of a mood than a clear ideology. While Léon Blum and the SFIO centrists regarded it as anarchistic, the new members of the SFIC saw it as a symbol of "the Revolution."³ In fact, the Russian Revolution was considered an extension of the French Revolution. An article in a 1917 copy of L'Humanité reads as follows: "It is said that everything that has happened in the streets in Petrograd has been carried out to the cry of 'Vive la France!'"⁴ Even Lenin himself told Frossard that the Russians were being faithful to French revolutionary traditions "as the river is faithful to its source in flowing toward the sea."⁵ But aside from this nationalistic attraction, Bolshevism was not so important for what it represented as for what it opposed. In the words of one of the new French communists of 1920:

I know nothing of Bolshevism. I have neither the leisure nor the means to study it. But my landlord, my boss, and my neighbor - each of whom is more greedy and reactionary than the next - speak badly of it. Therefore it must be doing something worthwhile.⁶

Perhaps the French knew very little about the Bolsheviks in 1920; but Lenin and Trotsky knew a considerable amount about the French. Lenin had had contact with the handful of dissenting French Socialists who had attended the Zimmerwald

Conference during the war. Lenin saw the conference as the first step toward the building of a new International, and he saw the war as an opportunity for revolution and civil war within each belligerent state.⁷ As mentioned earlier, the French delegation to that conference was merely seeking an immediate end to the war and objecting to all Socialist participation in the conflict. They considered Lenin to be an extremist and refused to take him seriously.⁸ Trotsky, on the other hand, had been in Paris since before the war until his expulsion in 1916. He associated with the small group of pacifists who were forming the Committee for the Resumption of International Relations (between Socialists and workers), and from this contact, he developed an impression of the kinds of ideas that would appeal and apply to the specific case of France.⁹

As soon as the war was over, the Bolsheviks invited all European revolutionaries to come to Russia to organize a new International. Lenin wanted to thwart the effort of rightist Socialists to revive the old Second International; he wanted instead a new one, led by the Bolsheviks and avowedly hostile to reformist Socialism.¹⁰ The Third Communist International (the Comintern) was founded on March 4, 1919 and its "21 Conditions" for admission to the Comintern were drawn up at the Second Congress, in July-August 1920. As described above, the French vote for membership in the new International took place later that same year. Reinforcing the notion that Bolshevism and membership reflected a

mood rather than a serious commitment to an ideology is the fact that the delegations to the 1920 Tours Congress never officially voted on the 21 Conditions.¹¹ (These were the conditions requiring a party to organize itself along Lenin's model of "democratic centralism": a highly centralized and disciplined party whose membership is periodically purged.)¹² As the Tours Congress of 1920 was voting for admission to the Comintern, it received a telegram from the Bolshevik Zinoviev, in the Comintern, prohibiting the membership of Jean Longuet, son-in-law of Karl Marx.¹³ Robert Wohl explains that Longuet was considered too dangerous:

He was a man of principle, who would not knuckle under...For men setting out to create a new kind of political movement,...the decision to bar the door to Longuet and his friends made excellent sense. Sentimentalists...could be remolded...Opportunists...could be used and if necessary discarded. Socialist leaders of Longuet's type would simply be a hindrance. Too reflective to overlook the implications of Bolshevik methods, too honest to let themselves be used, too committed to the old ways to be won over to totalitarianism in the afternoon of their careers, they had no place in a party whose objective was political power rather than social justice.¹⁴

This early evidence of Bolshevik control over the French communist movement is a birthmark which, some believe, is still visible today.

2. Development of PCF

The SFIC proclaimed itself the French Communist Party (PCF) in October of 1921, the the First PCF Party Congress was held in Marseilles in December of that same year. Lenin had realized the adverse side-effects of telegraphing his orders to the various new parties, so to this first French congress he sent two Comintern emissaries instead.¹⁵ Thus,

Moscow's representatives were present when the party discussed its national defense policy, a key item on the agenda.¹⁶ This ended up being nothing more than the prewar Socialist policy of opposition to all war credits, support for the independence of all peoples and, in case of war, the calling of a general strike.¹⁷

a. Resistance

The party accomplished little during its first six months of existence, except general protest against the government and expressions of vague solidarity with the Russian Revolution.¹⁸ This failure of the French movement to apply itself constructively to the cause of communism came to Lenin's attention, and in March of 1922 he remarked:

The transformation of a party of the old parliamentary type...into a party of a new type, a truly revolutionary party, truly communist, is an extremely difficult thing. The French case demonstrates this difficulty in perhaps the most evident manner.¹⁹

Furthermore, during this same period, a leading PCF member complained that "our unkind adversaries accuse us of having added a 22nd condition to the original 21, namely 'The 21 conditions don't count.'"²⁰ By 1923, Lenin was saying "there is at present no communist party in France..."²¹ This severe admonishment was due to the PCF's refusal to obey Comintern instructions to seek "a united labor front" with the centrist Socialists. In 1922 Lenin had decided that the initial post-war opportunity for revolution had subsided and that capitalism had become stabilized. This meant a change in tactics: violent revolution must be temporarily replaced by an alliance

of all communist and non-communist workers for the common pursuit of short-term, immediate goals.²² French Party Secretary-General Frossard, however, refused to attempt such a reunification with the Socialists, stating that he could not seek an alliance with the very people he had been maligning as "traitors to the working class" for the past year or more; for this refusal, Frossard was repeatedly criticized by the leadership of the Comintern.²³ In December of 1922, on orders from the Comintern, Frossard was made to share the secretary-generalship of the party with Albert Treint.²⁴

The Comintern already wielded a great deal of power in the PCF, as evidenced by the following account. Treint was arrested early in 1923 and, while in prison, he offered his resignation from the party (due to the party's press having censored an article he had written). His resignation was not accepted by the Comintern; for, as long as Moscow wanted and trusted an individual in a particular office, that individual stayed - regardless of his own or his colleagues' desire that he retire.²⁵ By the same token, when Moscow desired the expulsion of an undesirable, this too was accomplished.

b. Submission

When Lenin died in 1924 and Stalin triumphed over Trotsky for the position of leader of the international communist movement, the PCF felt the repurcussions of the change. Few PCF members had been aware of the Stalin-Trotsky struggle, but if asked, their preference would probably have

been for Trotsky to win. A Trotskyite cult had developed within the French working classes, for he had impressed them with his remedies for their troubles. With "a phenomenal theoretical and firsthand knowledge of French conditions," he had captured their imagination.²⁶ The PCF leadership did not relish the idea of repudiating Trotsky, and yet it dared not counter the majority of the Russian party and the Comintern. A loyal French Trotskyite, Boris Souvarine, learned of the Stalinist excesses during the power struggle in Moscow but he suppressed the information from the rest of the party. For,

What possible good could come from publishing articles which the French could not understand and which would require whole volumes to explain...The role of the French Communists is to study the Russian debates in order to profit from them, and not to get involved in a dispute when they have so much to do at home...If it is understandable that the Bolsheviks should be carried away by a certain internal logic of conflict, and give themselves over to unjust attacks, it would be intolerable for these attacks to be renewed in the French party by comrades who do not have the excuse of being inflamed by blows given or received.²⁷

Thus, the PCF subjected itself to the change and Souvarine and Frossard, among others, were expelled; the one for his Trotskyite past, the other for his intransigence in the united front policy. There was no longer any doubt that the Soviet Union was the undisputed dictator of the Comintern and of all its member parties. At the Third Comintern Congress (1921), Trotsky had said:

We are defending this bulwark of the world revolution, since at the given moment there is no other in the world. When another stronghold is erected in France or in Germany, then the one in Russia will lose nine-tenths of its significance; and we shall then go to you in Europe to defend

this other and more important stronghold. Finally, Comrades, it is sheer absurdity to believe that we deem this Russian stronghold of the Revolution to be the center of the world.²⁸

But by the Fifth Comintern Congress (1924), Stalin was demanding that the status of the USSR and its party be enhanced by the bolshevization of all Comintern member parties. A bolshevized party was one that was more closely linked to the masses, more able to exploit revolutionary situations. It was one that embraced the principles and tactics of Leninism. It was centralized, without factions, and mirrored the ideas and practices of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). This policy was credible at the time as the Soviet Union was the only proletarian state in existence, and it manifested every intent of enduring.²⁹

In France in 1924, the Communists had not been able to attract much of a following. The 1921 tactic of a Communist-Socialist united front on both the top (leadership) and bottom (rank and file) levels had failed miserably.³⁰ With a great deal of Russian financial backing, the party managed to get an initial 26 candidates elected to Parliament in 1924.³¹ (But this was only 7.9% of the vote.)³² In 1924, the PCF was not a mass party; due to political in-fighting and general disillusionment, it had lost more than 60% of its original members. Moreover the party was attempting to recruit followers from the traditional Socialist elite, rather than from the unskilled workers, discontented peasants or rebellious immigrants; by 1924 it had attracted less than 2% of the nation's industrial workers.³³ Intellectually,

the party described itself at this time as "20 percent Jaurèsism, 10 percent Marxism, 20 percent Leninism, 20 percent Trotskyism, and 30 percent confusionism."³⁴

Thus, from 1924 to 1926, bolshevization began. It was not to be fully completed until the early 1930s. Leninist doctrine promised that the communist parties were a new type of party, the vanguard of the rising revolutionary proletariat. Therefore the party must be thoroughly working-class in membership and leadership. The Comintern wanted national party leaders with working-class backgrounds, with pragmatic (not intellectual) skills. The party leader had to be able to carry out the policy lines emanating from the Soviet leadership. It was in 1924 that Maurice Thorez, future Secretary-General of the PCF, was promoted to the PCF Central Committee - he was only 24 years old.³⁵

From 1924 to 1928, the party was instructed to practice the united front only at the bottom (i.e. try to persuade Socialist rank and file to join the communist movement.) But this tactic failed. No gains were made in the 1924 municipal elections or the 1925 cantonal elections, and not one Communist senator was elected in 1926.³⁶ The party needed something new to capture the attention of the masses. Something new came in 1928, but its merits were minimal. For the past year, the Soviet Union had been watching revolutionary developments in China with a very keen eye. The Comintern Plenum of 1927 divided the world into two camps: Soviet and Chinese versus Capitalist. The CPSU could finally

claim a position of leadership in the world revolutionary movement. The Soviet Union was no longer to be regarded as a backward country; it was now the living proof of successful revolution.³⁷ With this renewed revolutionary fervor, the CPSU instructed the PCF, through the Comintern, to begin a united front from below, with absolutely no concessions to the social democratic parties. Kermit McKenzie explains that

On the whole, social democracy...was regarded as the most serious enemy of the Communist Party within the labor movement. For there could be no revolution without the proletariat - and no support would come from the proletariat without eradicating the Social Democrats first! For the left wing of social democracy talked of revolution, but did nothing about it. The Communist Party was to strike, demonstrate and protest in other ways - teach the proletariat class militancy.³⁸

Regional (Länder) secretariats were set up among the Comintern parties, with France and Italy belonging to the Romance Länder. Moreover, the CPSU decided that votes by various national delegations at Comintern congresses would be accorded on the basis of importance of the country. France and Italy were ranked third most important in all of the Comintern.

Whereas the Italian communists were reprimanded by Stalin for trying to interpret the instructions of the 1928 Comintern Congress,³⁹ the French seem to have embraced the new mission of unity-at-the-bottom with rare radical militancy. PCF personalities began provoking the authorities with acts of civil disobedience, evading capture and hiding from the police. When the PCF lost nearly 50% of its deputies in the 1928 elections, the party soon saw the

detrimental effects of Bolshevik tactics applied to French society. Ronald Tiersky has explained that

The PCF, born as a mass party in a liberal parliamentary setting that offered a legal existence and regular, popularly legitimated elections, seemed on the point of being extinguished by the contradiction inherent in the importation of an organizational and strategic doctrine that had proved itself only in a context of extreme political repression, economic breakdown and defeat in war.⁴⁰

But with Stalin firmly at the helm of Comintern, the PCF continued this tactic for another seven years. Party membership declined steadily, in spite of the fact that this was the period of the great economic depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s.

3. Growth of SFIO

A return to normalcy - this was the 1920s' gift to France. Construction replaced devastation; industrial production surpassed pre-war levels; and immigrant workers ensured full production capability. It was a profitable decade for the SFIO; for, although the loser at the Congress of Tours, it quickly regained its preeminent position as leader of the Socialist movement in France. In 1924, with a membership of 73,000, the SFIO formed a coalition with the Radical Party (forming the Cartel of the Left) and proceeded to win a majority in the 1924 parliamentary elections. SFIO leader, Léon Blum, however, was an advocate of non-participation in bourgeois government cabinets unless the SFIO could control the coalition. Since it was only the junior party in the 1924 coalition, the SFIO settled merely for power in the Chamber of Deputies.

4. Defense Policy of 1920s

In spite of their apparent strength in parliament during the 1920s, the Socialists do not seem to have exercised any particular leadership in directing the nation's foreign or defense affairs.

The PCF, on the other hand, did become significantly involved in defense matters. Following the Comintern line the party denounced the Versailles Treaty and demanded self-determination for Alsace and Lorraine. From 1921 to 1922, PCF deputies consistently voted against military credits.⁴¹ The Comintern of 1921 had called for French Communists to do everything they could to make French soldiers in the occupied zone of Germany feel ashamed of their police roles. But the PCF knew there was little that could practically be done in light of the continued hostility of most Frenchmen towards the Germans. In 1922, at the Fourth Comintern Congress, the Versailles Treaty became a key issue. The PCF was told to demand the withdrawal of French troops from the occupied left bank of the Rhine and to prevent the projected occupation of the Ruhr valley. The Russians saw trouble between France and Germany over reparations as a potential weakening of the German bourgeoisie, a sharpening of class antagonisms and a provocation for revolution.⁴²

In January 1923, when French Prime Minister Poincaré ordered French troops into the Ruhr, the SFIO position was "vague."⁴³ The PCF, however, was ordered by the Comintern to organize a vast campaign against French imperialism and

occupation of the Ruhr. PCF Secretary-General Treint went to Germany for an international communist conference which concluded with a pronouncement that the PCF should undermine the morale of the occupying French troops, distribute communist propaganda and should prepare for a general strike throughout France in case of war or prolonged occupation of the Ruhr. The French Communist Youth movement became extremely active during the Ruhr occupation, distributing over two million leaflets and manifestos to the occupation forces, often right in their barracks. The tracts, printed in German, French and Arabic (for the Tunisian and Algerian troops),⁴⁴ were generally similar to this one:

In no circumstances will you accept the humiliating function of counter-revolutionary gendarmes. In no circumstances will your bayonets pierce the breasts of the rebelling German workers...Set out for the Army in order to be the soldiers of Communism...⁴⁵

In short, soldiers were encouraged to fraternize with the German workers.⁴⁶

In 1923, the Chamber of Deputies approved a motion to suspend the parliamentary immunity of its PCF representatives in order that they might be arrested and tried for their disruptive opposition to the policies of the national government.⁴⁷

In 1924 the PCF began a remarkable anti-colonialist campaign. The PCF had had an opportunity to act in support of the Algerian and Tunisian liberation movements in 1922. The Comintern had sent a memorandum to the Algerian branch of the PCF requesting it aid the local rebel efforts. The Algerian Party replied that it could not accept the Comintern's colonial

policy; for, it was premature and dangerous to make appeals to the natives to revolt. A liberation of Algeria at that time would probably be reactionary, not progressive, if it came before a victorious revolution in France. The PCF in North Africa had yet to establish in the minds of the natives a favorable attitude toward communism. At the Fifth Comintern Congress (1924) the French were castigated for their sluggishness in supporting colonial liberation movements.⁴⁸ Therefore, when Moroccan rebels began fighting against Spanish imperialism in July of 1924, the PCF took up the cause readily. The party telegraphed its congratulations to the rebel leader, Abd-el-Krim, for his victories, and the party expressed the hope that he would continue "the struggle against all imperialists, including French, until Moroccan soil is set completley free."⁴⁹ In 1925, when the French government intervened with troops in Morocco and also in Syria, the PCF protested the repressive actions and called for fraternization of the troops with the Moroccan rebels. They also demanded recognition of an independent Moroccan republic headed by Abd-el-Krim.⁵⁰ One hundred and sixty-five French communists were imprisoned in France for their propagandizing activities between summer and fall of 1925.⁵¹

Once again, the SFIO took only a "vague" stand on the intervention issues.⁵² But it permitted the Chamber of Deputies to continue its prosecution of PCF members on into 1925, even though the Socialists by then held a predominant position in the Chamber and could have perhaps curtailed the anti-PCF campaign.⁵³

B. UNION IN THE 1930s

1. Leadership of Maurice Thorez

The decade opened with an important party election for the PCF. Maurice Thorez, emerging from a year in jail and criticizing the PCF leadership for its failure to follow Comintern directives and to successfully implement a united front policy, was elected Secretary-General of the Central Committee. Three months later he had successfully created the post of Secretary of the Politburo and had had himself elected to fill it. As he stepped into this position, Thorez became the first real chief of the PCF. More than a leader, Thorez began consolidating the party power around his person. The old leaders were removed between 1931 and 1932. At the end of 1931, the Comintern sent a team of advisors to school and support the new chief.

National elections were held in 1932, during this period of PCF leadership changeover. The PCF recorded a further loss of two parliamentary seats and 20,000 members.⁵⁴ The Cartel of the Left, meanwhile, was victorious once again: the Radical Party received the highest number of seats in parliament, but the SFIO emerged for the first time as the single most popular party in France.⁵⁵

1933 was a landmark year in both France and the USSR, for this was the year that Hitler came to power in Germany and a Nazi party was formed in Austria. The Soviet Union began to think it needed closer diplomatic ties with the democracies of Europe. This goal could be enhanced if the respective

communist parties were in a position to pressure their governments into a pro-Soviet stance. For these reasons, the USSR began seeking a change in tactics for the national communist parties. In France there still existed one rival to Thorez: Jacques Doriot. He saw that the previous policy of "united from below" and "class against class" was not working. He favored a policy of "united from above" - a true union with the Socialists. This, as it turns out, was precisely the tactic the Soviets were hoping to see develop in countries like France; but to openly direct such a dramatic shift in policy was viewed as slightly humiliating by the Soviet leadership. Therefore, in 193⁴, the Comintern summoned both Thorez and Doriot to Moscow "to put an end to the party's internal battle." According to the notes of a former PCF party member, the Russians were hoping that Doriot would present his idea of rapprochement with the Socialists, and in turn they could agree that such a policy would be best for France. But Doriot refused to go to Moscow and Thorez, smug and confident in his blind allegiance to the official Comintern line, went alone. Instead of helping the Russians, Thorez merely proceeded to admonish Doriot for his deviant ideas. Reportedly one of the secretaries of the Comintern (Manuilsky) became so exasperated with Thorez's "straight-arrow" behaviour that he declared, "you are too subservient to be a real leader!"⁵⁶ And still Thorez did not understand. Thorez's return from Moscow has been referred to in many sources as the return of the confirmed leader of the PCF; in reality it appears the Soviets had no one else with whom to deal.⁵⁷

[Doriot, thinking he was to be reprimanded, left the party and formed one of the major fascist parties in France during the 1930s and 40s.⁵⁸ In the hierarchy of French fascism, his party, the Parti Populaire Francais (PPF) was second only to Colonel de La Rocque's Croix de Feu, later known as the Parti Social Francais. During the Second World War, two major Vichy Ministers and several high ministerial officials of the Petain regime were former members of the PPF.⁵⁹]

2. Jauressian Blum

The SFIO, meanwhile, had been suffering from internal schisms of its own over Blum's insistence on non-participation in cabinets. Party unity was put to the ultimate test in 1933. Fear of war was mounting in France, and the Socialists were faced with the same dilemma as in 1914: should the party temporarily abandon its principles and ideals in order to join the bourgeois government for the defense of the nation? Leon Blum was a Jauressian insofar as he lived in constant hope of reuniting all French socialists into a strong, unified group that could then appeal to all socialists for international disarmament and the prevention of war. Therefore, Blum adamantly refused to dilute party principles by joining a bourgeois government. When the SFIO's coalition partners, the Radicals, started formulating an active policy of national defense (including increased defense expenditures), the SFIO turned away and began seeking a rapprochement with the PCF. Blum met with then-General Secretary Thorez in February 1933

to discuss the issue of socialist unification. Thorez objected on the grounds that there existed within the SFIO a rightist faction advocating collaboration with the bourgeois Radicals.⁶⁰ His intelligence was accurate: about 30 socialist deputies and 20,000 members of the SFIO (roughly one-sixth of the party) were in favor of active participation in the government - particularly now in a time of national crisis.⁶¹ The crack in the party widened ominously during a parliamentary vote on the defense budget. The right-Socialist deputies claimed they must support the policies of the Radical government lest the latter lose the confidence of parliament and fall, making way for a fascist, reactionary government of the middle classes.⁶² It is important to remember here that the Cartel of the Left had been ruling France ever since 1924 and that currently it was saddled with responsibility for bringing the nation out of a massive economic depression. Even though the depression was an international phenomenon, it still served as excellent fuel for a fascist or reactionary change of government incompetance. Therefore, it is quite probable that the fears of the SFIO's rightist faction could be readily substantiated. The vote in favor of the defense budget passed, supported by the right-Socialists and opposed by the Socialist majority. At this, the dissenters officially broke away from the SFIO and founded the Socialist Party of France (PSF), the most important split within the French socialist movement since the break with the communists in 1920.

By its rejection of the PSF and the Radical Party, the SFIO majority of centrists-Socialists had thus cut itself off from moderating, rightist influences. The only direction it could go for support was left. It will be recalled that Jaures had advocated a general strike before World War I in order to halt the development of the nation's war machine, the availability of which would only prompt a decision in favor of war. In view of this fact, it is significant to note that three months after the PSF defection, the SFIO and the PCF participated in a "joint plan of counteraction": on February 12, 1934, Socialist deputies and Party leaders led a massive anti-fascist demonstration march through Paris.⁶³ Demonstrators came from all leftist parties and groups. The action was part of a nationwide general strike that completely shut down all major cities including Paris.

3. Union

The success of the demonstration did not lead to automatic Union between the SFIO and the PCF, however, for Thorez insisted on pursuing the official Comintern direction to "beat the bourgeoisie and its main social support, the Socialist party...[and] win over the socialist worker from the traitor SFIO."⁶⁴ The Comintern leaders, however, were on daily airmail distribution for the SFIO party paper Le Populaire and they had been following the Socialist overtures. On June 24, 1934, Moscow officials received the Populaire of the 23rd in which Leon Blum was tendering the PCF yet another offer of unity. The Comintern officer Manuilsky was in favor of sending

an uncoded telegram immediately to the PCF, which was holding a party conference in Ivry, France. "If we lose forty-eight hours they will do something stupid," he is reported to have said. Nonetheless, he did wait - but only twenty-four hours: the time required to secure Stalin's approval for the telegram instructing Thorez to agree to a pact for "unity of action" with the Socialists.⁶⁵

Therefore, just as the Socialists had reluctantly given up all hope of a unity pact with the PCF, Party Secretary Thorez announced the party's willingness to negotiate a united front with the SFIO:

The [Communist] party must rise above all narrow sectarianism or formalism...This is not a case of a change of policy, but rather of changing something - in some cases a considerable something - in our tactics.⁶⁶

It is worth noting that, just six weeks before this momentous decision was made, the USSR and France had signed a treaty of alliance. There were suspicions at the time that this sudden policy reversal was due directly to the new requirements of Soviet foreign policy. A French Socialist of the day is recorded as saying:

Yes, I believe in unity, but an honest unity, and not unity directed from Moscow - Moscow which, under the mask of bolshevism, pursues a tsarist policy.⁶⁷

In any event, the Pact of United Action was signed one month later. In view of its recent conflicts with the Radical Party and dissident socialist parties, the SFIO was in no hurry to enlarge the pact. The PCF, however, worked feverishly to build the Front populaire. By July 1935, all the forces of the French Left had been consolidated into a Popular Front;⁶⁸

this included primarily the SFIO, the PCF, the Radical Party and the Intergroupe Socialiste, a collection of dissident socialist parties. France was now a strong ally for Russian defense and a bulwark against fascism.

4. Out-of-Government Foreign Policy

Between 1933 and 1935 the SFIO formulated a remarkable set of precise foreign policy attitudes. The French Socialists had succumbed to a defense policy of "armed security" once before - in 1914 - and France had still been invaded. Therefore, absolutely refusing to repeat the mistake, the SFIO insisted that "peace could be secured only through an international system of security based on controlled international disarmament within the framework of the League [of Nations]."⁶⁹ One must pause here a moment in order to fully appreciate the significance of those words.

a. The French Socialists wanted peace, and France was to do whatever was necessary to keep a war from ever beginning. This even included signing the 1933 Four-Power Pact with the fascist powers of Germany and Italy; if this served to settle differences between the various powers, then such an action was fully acceptable.⁷⁰ The French Socialists wanted all the nations of the world to form one, global, collective security system. This would be a union of all acting to protect the national security of each. If any nation should violate the sovereignty of another, the entire community of states would be empowered to impose upon the belligerent actor some kind of stringent sanction, a worldwide economic embargo for example.

b. France must disarm.⁷ There did not need to be a collective security system in place before disarmament could begin: if all nations were to disarm except Hitler's Germany, then it would stand out unequivocably as the aggressor in the event of conflict. Furthermore, unilateral disarmament would at least lessen the likelihood of war being answered by war. (The Socialists recommended the use of economic reprisals instead.) A delay in disarmament could only add fuel to Hitler's massive rearmament effort; for he was defending his actions by claiming that no one except Germany adhered to the disarmament terms of the Versailles Treaty. Germany was thereby justified in providing herself with means for her defense against armed neighbors. Léon Blum reasoned that even if absolute, universal disarmament were not really feasible in light of contemporary conditions, France should at least strive for the reduction and control of the world's most destructive weapons, such as airplanes.

c. There should be a nationalization of the French arms industry.⁷² Already in February 1932, SFIO leaders were telling parliament that its real "internationalist" enemies were the marchands de canons (arms manufacturers) - the international cartel of munitions makers that would supply even their countries' enemies with arms if it would prove profitable. The stockpiling of arms creates such a spirit of tension within a nation that "the smallest incident will set off the powder kegs. And then people will kill each other in the name of Right, Justice, their country..."⁷³ Above all, the French Socialists wanted to avoid re-creating

the feeling of 1913, when the final outbreak of war was greeted with a near sigh of relief - at last the long-expected, dreaded event had arrived; now one could go about getting rid of it once and for all.

d. France must make use of the League of Nations and make it work for international peace.⁷⁴ The Socialists believed the League could be endowed with some effective sanctions that it could use to enforce international, multilateral decisions. The sanctions were to be economic and not military in nature (such as an embargo on raw materials to a belligerent nation).

e. France should not build a large standing army.⁷⁵ The SFIO consistently voted against the military budget proposals that began appearing in 1933. They opposed the extension of national military service from one to two years, and this issue became the focal point for an entire propaganda campaign from 1933 to 1935 against the French army and the officer corps in particular. The temper of the campaign can be gleaned from a few exemplary phrases:

Did officers complain that reservists, called back for short periods of active duty, were incompetent? Well... this [is] not an unconscious incompetence but rather an intentional and justified sabotage of military maneuvers, reflecting the Frenchman's hostility to the useless military exercises he [is] being compelled to execute.⁷⁶

(A number of Socialists were arrested and tried for their demoralization and slander of the army.) Furthermore, French Socialists demanded amnesty for all conscientious objectors.

f. In summary, Léon Blum and his party opposed anything that could perpetrate a feeling of imminent war, and included in that category were the civil defense exercises.⁷⁷

Air raid drills and compulsory possession of a gas-mask were objected to for reasons of economy, but primarily because of the "war psychosis" they created.

After this review of the SFIO's pacifist policies, it must be understood that the SFIO was not a movement advocating revolutionary defeatism,⁷⁸ a doctrine advocating surrender in order to make more propitious the conditions for internal revolution. The SFIO under the leadership of Blum was much as it was under Jaurès. That is, everything had to be done to prevent the outbreak of war, but once France was attacked by a foreign power, French Socialists would be on the front lines of the national defense effort. They presented no threat of disruptive, internal revolution (like that experienced in Russia in 1917); nor would they refuse to enter the army. On the contrary, this policy was "a conditional acceptance of [the] national defense [of] a capitalist regime" - the condition being, of course, an attack on the homeland by a foreign aggressor.⁷⁹ Moreover, the Socialists were among the first to approve the idea of a modern mechanized force providing a defense in depth, an improvement over the inflexible Maginot line, and they also supported the tactical ideas of Colonel de Gaulle.⁸⁰ In short, the SFIO was prepared to support France's defense, not Napoleon's aggression.

When the French government signed an agreement with Mussolini in 1935 concerning the borders of Tunisia and Eritrea, the SFIO hailed the agreement as another step toward

peace and the reduction of international tensions.⁸¹ (The Socialists had been assured that no secret promises had been made that would allow Mussolini to take over Ethiopia.) But as tension mounted over the issue, and Great Britain went to the League of Nations to plead her case, the French Socialists were pleased; this was seen as a further step toward peace and collective security since it was working to keep Italy in check. No matter that this also constituted indirect approval of British imperial and colonial goals.

A few months after the Ethiopian crisis came the signing of the Franco-Soviet military defense pact. Having so painstakingly elaborated the above antimilitaristic program for about three years, the French Socialists were horrified by the sudden belligerence being advocated by the PCF. After having refused in 1933 to unite with the SFIO because some members of the latter were voting in favor of war credits, the PCF suddenly began expounding wholehearted support for such belligerent measures as the unconditional duty of national defense (i.e. it would be reasonable to consider using French forces even if the territory of France has not been invaded).⁸² At the time the Franco-Soviet Pact was signed, Leon Blum had endorsed it in the hope that it would help create some kind of collective security system.⁸³ The major shock struck the SFIO when the leader of the world's only "truly socialist" nation declared himself in support of war preparations. On May 15, 1935, Stalin declared:

The first duty [of France and the Soviet Union] is to permit no weakening of the means of their national defense.

In this respect, [I] understand and fully approve the policy of national defense pursued by France in order to maintain its armed forces at a level consistent with its security.⁸⁴

To this announcement, Blum could only reply:

I am still in a daze. The more I think about it the less I understand it. How is it possible that the representatives of the Soviet government [have] signed this communique? To be sure, the dispatches...had prepared us for an event, and even an important one. But the actual fact overshadows all possible previsions...[Stalin] disapproves of the campaign which we have fought endlessly over the years and which sees true security only in the collective organization of arbitration, of mutual assistance, of disarmament.⁸⁵

With Stalin's surprising change in policy, the French Socialists' foreign policy was relegated overnight to the realm of inconsequential, uninformed political rhetoric. And into their place stepped the masters in the art of hairpin reversals: the French Communists.

While the PCF appeared to some to be the vanguard of the defense of France, it had become the source of serious concern to others, namely the Rightist forces in France. Significantly, these latter, usually so anti-German, were very worried that Russia planned to take advantage of a war situation in order to set up a Bolshevik state in France with the help of friends and adherents already in place within the country: the PCF, SFIO and other leftist groups. Noticing the loyalty with which the PCF aligned itself with Soviet policy interests and remarking with concern the size and strength of the newly-formed Front Populaire, Rightist France began saying, "Better Hitler than Blum."⁸⁶ An ominous mood of appeasement fell over France: the chilling possibility of another war like that of 1914 and an intense fear of falling

prey to Bolshevik opportunism pervaded French society and instilled in it a general spirit of non-resistance to Germany. Many people thought that perhaps if nothing were done to provoke German aggression, France would be left alone.

In March of 1936, one week after the French government's ratifications of the Franco-Soviet pact, Hitler occupied the Rhineland, justifying his action by saying France had just violated both the Versailles and the Locarno treaties. Hitler was left uncontested in the occupied area. As mentioned above, public opinion in France was overwhelmingly against any military action at that time.⁸⁷ Moreover, the Socialists were opposed to the government's decision to send troops to the border; this seemed to them an unnecessary heightening of tension.⁸⁸ When the British government also refused its support, the French government finally retracted its plan. Blum was to write, many years later, that France had suffered incalculable damage by failing to repulse Hitler on the Rhine. He mentioned especially the weakness this caused in France's collective security system and the trust that was lost among France's small-power allies.⁸⁹

5. The Front Populaire Government

Three months after the Rhineland crisis, national parliamentary elections brought the Popular Front into power. The SFIO received about two million votes and emerged as the most popular party in the nation and the largest party in the Chamber of Deputies.⁹⁰ The PCF gains were the most dramatic, however. The PCF popular vote had doubled from 796,000 in 1932

to 1,500,000 in 1936, and from 10 to 72 seats in Parliament.⁹¹ This was 12.6% of the vote - never had the PCF scored so high.⁹² Charles Micaud writes that the PCF began inviting internal debate and no longer insisted on strict orthodoxy. Its membership grew accordingly: from 40,000 in 1934 to 327,000 in 1937.⁹³ As the Front Populaire came to power in 1936, the PCF agreed to support the Socialist-Radical coalition but refused to participate in the government. This allowed it the freedom to criticize - a freedom it used with disturbing frequency.

Leon Blum became Prime Minister of the 1936 Popular Front government. He immediately instituted a large number of social reforms in addition to a plan to nationalize the armaments industry. According to Ronald Tiersky, this plan was never efficiently implemented, but it was intended to stimulate a policy of more active defense against a German adversary - a policy similar to that being advocated by Colonel de Gaulle.⁹⁴ Furthermore, faced with the actual responsibility of leading and defending the country, Blum and his Socialist Party repudiated some of the old Socialist ideals: they not only endorsed military appropriations, but also launched a major, long-range plan to modernize the equipment of the French army and air force.⁹⁵ Plans were also made to liberalize French colonial policy.⁹⁶ The projected measures would have broadened the rights of the native peoples of Algeria and Syria, but they were still under discussion in parliament when the Popular Front fell in 1938.

a. Spanish Civil War

Before Blum could effectively implement any of these projects, however, he was confronted with the problem of French aid or other intervention in the Spanish civil war. In spite of stiff PCF demands to the contrary, Blum refused the Spanish Popular Front's appeal for aid. Blum wanted to localize the conflict and discourage the transfer of foreign arms to the belligerents.⁹⁷

When Blum refused to send aid to the Spanish, Thorez apparently was instrumental in convincing Stalin (who wished to avoid a conflict with Hitler) to accept the idea of International Brigades. Many PCF leaders and militants participated in these brigades, and French Communists acted as conduits for considerable amounts of money and material. Thorez himself went to the war zone in February 1937. It appears the PCF wanted to do as much as possible without compromising national defense or the Franco-Soviet alliance.⁹⁸

b. Failure of the Popular Front

The Popular Front in France had never been a tightly cohesive union. Consequently, when the SFIO and PCF persisted in their sharp disagreement over the policy toward Spain, the Front began to crumble. The first Blum government fell in June 1937 over a fiscal matter.

Blum returned to the post of Prime Minister nine months later and, with his new Cabinet, he began discussing the possibility of sending French forces into Spain if Italy and Germany did not stop sending aid to Franco. In any event, the Cabinet decided to organize extensive shipments

of military supplies for the Spanish Republicans.⁹⁹ Gordon Wright argues that Blum had wanted to send aid all along, but that pressure from the British forced him to keep hands off the struggle of his comrades and neighbors. Blum accorded Franco-British relations a place of great importance, realizing France's dependence on British friendship. Blum even considered resigning from office when he was unable to help the Spaniards; but the Spanish government told him that they needed friends in Paris even more than they needed arms and persuaded him to remain in office.¹⁰⁰ French arms were destined never to reach Spain; for, Blum's second government fell after only one month and his successor, Daladier, sealed off the Pyrenees to all arms shipments.¹⁰¹

The coup de grace for the disintegrating Popular Front was the French signature of the Munich Agreement on September 29, 1938. While the nation as a whole and the Socialists in particular voiced their support for the contents of the agreement,¹⁰² the PCF declared it could not agree with their partners' willingness to sacrifice Russia simply in order to avoid war with Germany.¹⁰³ The French Communists then moved into firm opposition against their former political partners.

6. Nazi-Soviet Pact

The dramatic signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact on August 22, 1939, apparently came as a surprise to the leaders of the PCF, who were on vacation and found it necessary to return home within three days in order to make a statement.

Written by Thorez, the statement evidences a considerable degree of disbelief and unusual divergence from the Comintern line:

We find ourselves once again, one year after Munich, in the presence of a situation in which the people might be dragged into war at any moment. Hitler's fascism... is a constant menace for the security of the 'European' peoples. What can one do to prevent any new aggression? The Soviet Union, loyal to its policy of peace, has undertaken a policy of dislocation of the aggressor bloc... The German-Soviet Pact...has checked the Munich Plan... But if, despite all, Hitler begins war, let him understand well that he will find before him the united people of France, the communists in the front line, defending the security of the country...It is because we are desirous of peace and of French security that we seek the conclusion of a French-Anglo-Soviet alliance, which remains perfectly possible and necessary.¹⁰⁴

The same day, the Communist parliamentary group vowed that "the French Communists will collaborate without reticence toward national defense."¹⁰⁵ Communist senator Marcel Cachin wrote to Leon Blum:

At this grave hour, the Communist Party declares that if Hitler declares war on France, he will find himself confronted by...the Communists in the first rank...We declare that we approve the measures taken by the government.¹⁰⁶

But this was a losing battle: a PCF pledge to support the war would 1) get the French Communists in trouble with the Comintern and 2) not convince the French people anyway. In fact, on the very day the above promises were being made by the leaders of the PCF, their party papers L'Humanité and Ce Soir were being seized as "undermining national defense." Ironically, the issue of L'Humanité that was seized carried the following article:

Unity of the French Nation Against the Hitlerite Aggressor: ...this is no time for those who want to preserve the independence and the future of the nation to argue with each other on the possible interpretation of events...France must be placed on the best possible footing, able both to maintain a firm attitude and to fulfill its obligations to the menaced Polish ally...that is the unchallenged conviction of all Frenchmen worthy of the name. It is our conviction. The moment calls for the union of all Frenchmen. If Hitler dares to carry out the action he is thinking of, Communists will be in the front rank...they represent a considerable human, material and moral force, which is ready to fulfill its obligations and carry out what it has promised.¹⁰³

The PCF leadership continued to support an anti-fascist policy of national defense for about a month after the Pact had been signed: the PCF delegates voted national defense credits the day after Hitler invaded Poland, and they applauded Daladier's speech to the Chamber of Deputies. Even Maurice Thorez joined his military unit.

But on September 17, 1939, when the USSR dispatched the Red Army across the Polish border, the Comintern finally issued instructions to its member parties. In a stunningly novel interpretation of the war, the Comintern declared it to be "the second imperialist war" in which the proletariat could have no interest. (This interpretation remained the official party line until the Nazi invasion of Russia in 1941.) The Comintern admonished any communist party supporting its nation's defense movement - especially the parties of France, Great Britain and the U.S. For these three bourgeois states had conducted a policy of retreat and appeasement during the 1930s in order to let their rival (German) turn all its efforts against the USSR. Meanwhile the bourgeois, seemingly "non-aggressive" states would keep the war

going so that in the end they could partition the postwar world among themselves, having let others do the fighting.

Accordingly the Communist Parties were told to create united and popular fronts from below only, to end the war, to destroy the bourgeois capitalist system, and to set up socialist society. In perfect line with these orders, Maurice Thorez was to later make this condemnation:

In September 1939, the French bourgeoisie, having earlier given Spain to Franco, having repeatedly betrayed its allies, declared war on Germany under pretext of rendering help to the reactionary lords of Poland, that 'prison of peoples.'¹⁰⁸

Within a few days of the receipt of the Comintern instructions, the party's Central Committee declared that the French government had declared war on Germany without the agreement of parliament. On September 26, the PCF was officially banned and PCF mayors and local officials were suspended from their jobs.¹⁰⁹ As for the party's parliamentary deputies, they reorganized themselves into the Workers' and Peasants Group, so as to avoid the dissolution order. But the revolutionary defeatism (i.e. immediate peace on Hitler's terms) espoused by the Group in October 1939 caused an investigation of the Group and the subsequent arrest and trial of 44 Communist deputies, among others, on charges of treason.

The PCF had been weakened by the Nazi-Soviet Pact and the bout with French authorities. At the beginning of the 1930s, when its membership was small, the PCF had been able to maintain a tightly-knit, well disciplined organization. With this kind of support, the PCF leadership was able to

cleverly maneuver around difficult situations requiring drastic and sometimes illogical policy reversals. By the end of the decade, however, nine-tenths of the Party's members were new, post-1934 era recruits with roots too shallow to bear up against a shock like the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Estimates are that the PCF suffered considerable losses from its middle-level leadership and rank and file cadres during the crucial year of 1939.¹¹⁰

7. Army Reaction

Before terminating this discussion of the PCF in the 1930s, it might be valuable to point out that there was one group in French society which was not convinced by the PCF's slalom maneuverings of 1934 and 1939: the French Army. Concerned about the persistent Communist antimilitaristic activities of the first half of the 1930s, the Army instituted a system of underground networks that would alert civilian and military decisionmakers as to the necessity of adapting the Army to new strategic and tactical roles. Commandant Loustaunau-Lacau stated during the 1930s:

The Army must be purged of the cells that the Communist party is constantly developing, with the objective of destroying discipline and wrecking morale...We are organizing ourselves to have in every military district, every military unit, every air base and every armaments factory an officer who will gather information, and who will be seconded by a reserve officer, chosen by him, in the wings.

Reportedly, the collected information was passed to staff officers "sufficiently highly placed" to influence postings, transfers and penalties.¹¹¹

The above efforts of French military leaders to de-politicize the Army appear to be an attempt to maintain the French military institution as an apolitical tool of the government. The care taken to keep the nation's decision-makers informed on the condition of the Army indicates the traditional French military concern for assuring a viable defense of the French nation. In the above discussion, however, the French Army leadership does not appear to be a particularly ardent disciple of republicanism. The anti-communist campaign seems to indicate a continuation of the traditionally conservative or (to borrow the terminology of Barbara Tuchman) "nationalist" French military mind-set.

8. Conclusions

By the time France declared war on Germany (September 3, 1939), the SFIO had also moved into political opposition. The Socialist party had had a chance to realize all its dreams, but it had failed. And, unfortunately, the disastrous consequences of that failure (particularly as reflected in the course of international affairs) are still being felt today.

Since it can be openly acknowledged that the PCF during the 1920s and 1930s was according primary allegiance to the Soviet Union and merely following the latter's directives in matters of defense and foreign affairs, one does not wonder at the PCF's failure to save France from the holocaust of World War II. One does wonder, however, at the Socialists' impotence in the defense realm.

There were many factors that affected Socialist decisionmaking in the two decades preceding the Second World War. One of those was political inexperience. During the 1920s the SFIO enjoyed great popularity among the French people and yet, because of doctrinaire blindness, it opted not to participate in the coalition government and learn the problems inherent to policymaking. Instead of accepting responsibility, the Party remained in comfortable opposition. Thus when the SFIO came to power in the turbulent years of 1936 to 1938, its members and leaders had no experience in organizing a nation, much less in leading it and defending it from an impending world war.

Another factor was the public's mood of appeasement. Fear of another war gripped the heart of the French populace; another war like the last one was to be avoided at all cost. Rightist elements of society were haunted by the spectre of Bolshevism, and they found fuel for their fears in the growing French Leftist movement. No small wonder the public's aversion to fascism waned in the face of the apparently more immediate possibilities of war and revolution.

One factor which must not be overlooked was the Socialists' blind idealism. Looking back on the brief years of the Popular Front, one can see repeated instances in which idealism obscured the Socialist policy-makers' appreciation for the objective requirements and singular demands of a crisis situation. A few of the most important difficulties were:

a. The Socialist propensity to view the world through a class-oriented grid. John Marcus has remarked in his book French Socialism in the Crisis Years that the Socialists failed to realize that fascism was not a class-oriented movement.¹¹² He posits the idea that to effectively combat or resist fascism, one should develop a strong feeling of nationalism within one's country and not subdivide the society into "united" fronts, pitted one group against the other (Right versus Left).

b. Their unique notion of the concept of peace. Léon Blum, while in prison during the Vichy era of the 1940s, was to reflect back on the pre-war days of the Popular Front and lament:

The idea of peace in Socialist propaganda...was founded on a conviction of the sacred character of the life of each human being. This is a pure and noble ideal if it leads to the rule: "Never willingly take another man's life," rather than to the imperative command: "Above all, save your skin."...A noble propaganda would have shown that in the face of a new dangerous situation in Europe, peace could only be preserved by risking war...¹¹³

IV. WAR AND RESISTANCE (1939-1944)

A. CAPITULATION

Within three months of being outlawed, the PCF had its underground press in operation, advocating outright neutrality and conciliation with the Germans. The Germans' invasion of France in May 1940 did nothing to sway the French Communists from their line. In fact, the first issue of L'Humanité after the invasion read: "When two gangsters fight among themselves, the honest people have no obligation to aid one of them, on the pretext that the other had dealt an unfair blow."¹ Furthermore, it appears the PCF was planning a French Brest-Litovsk as it proceeded, during the six weeks between the Nazi crossing of the French border and the armistice, to call for the formation of a new French government: one which would include the Communists and seek an immediate peace.²

"Peace" was almost immediate. The pacifism and appeasement of the Front Populaire era had taken hold of the French nation. An extension of the Maginot Line north to the English Channel had been deemed too expensive.³ Military leaders, like Marshal Petain and General Gamelin, had refused the advice of young officers like Colonel de Gaulle who were advocating greater air power and increased mechanization of French forces. Gordon Wright explains, however, that

Their fault was not lack of loyalty to the republic, but lack of imagination and foresight; they clung to their memories of the First World War and anticipated another long defensive struggle of the same type.⁴

The conquest of France took barely one month. Marshal Petain, as the new head of the French government, signed an armistice with Germany on June 22, 1940, and on July 10th the following law was passed by parliament:

The National Assembly gives all powers to the Government of the Republic under the authority and signature of Marshal Petain to promulgate in one or more acts a new Constitution of the French State.⁵

A spirit of resignation descended over 85% of France's senators and deputies as they accepted the cold inevitability of German hegemony. Only 80 parliamentarians opposed the creation of the Vichy government and only 36 of those were Socialists. Many Socialists had decided to cooperate with, and participate in the new government. (For example, Vichy's first Minister of Labor was a Socialist!)⁶ But others, like Leon Blum, were arrested and condemned to life imprisonment by Marshal Petain or else they went into self-imposed retirement. Gordon Wright explains that prominent Socialist leaders were too well known to risk becoming involved in resistance activities.⁷

B. UNDERGROUND

Some Socialists, however, began organizing heroic clandestine operations against the occupying German forces and joining the many other small resistance groups that were springing up throughout France during the summer of 1940. A Socialist

and non-Communist Leftist resistance group that became one of the most important in France was the Liberation Nord (LN). By the end of 1940, it was publishing a newspaper with articles written by Jean Texcier, a Socialist journalist who was to become one of the most prominent figures in the Resistance press. Texcier, through the LN press, would coldly denounce the Petain regime in words such as these:

Compared with the military clash between Germany and Britain, ...are not all these big and small measures ⁸ taken at Vichy just a pastime of a gang of prisoners?

By 1941 the LN had made contact with the Free French in Britain, and it slowly began building a network of affiliated regional sections.

The French Communists did not enter the resistance movement until Russia, not France, was in danger of German domination. When the USSR was invaded in June 1941, the Soviets and the Comintern directed an all-out effort be made to create popular fronts "from above": i.e. communist parties were to ally with everyone except fascists in the struggle against Nazi Germany. None of the programs for popular fronts were to contain any mention of revolution, socialism or communist seizure of power, in order to reassure the new partners of the communists' sincerity and patriotism.⁹ The French Communists succeeded in establishing the largest, most important resistance organization in France: the Front Nationale (FN). Its ideology was that of an all-encompassing Popular Front, but its key positions were filled by supremely dedicated and daring members of the PCF. It was the only resistance group

that operated in both the north and south zones and on both a military and political level. Due to their fanatical bravery, the Communists became the most hunted and persecuted party of the Resistance. Whereas most of the other resistance groups had been concentrating on keeping up public morale by publishing clandestine newspapers, the Communists in the FN believed they were making France ready for a great national revolution. Few of the other resistants had any long-range plans for political action. Few even cared about politics, for their goal was, and continued to be, the defeat of Germany.¹⁰

The PCF made contact with de Gaulle in January 1943 and declared itself the only party of the Resistance. Refusing to abide the PCF's claim to political exclusivity, the SFIO officially reconstituted itself shortly after the PCF statement and purged from membership all those who had voted for Pétain.¹¹

C. PEACE PLANS

Ever since the end of 1942, de Gaulle had wanted to create a National Council of the Resistance (CNR) in order to show the Allies the breadth of his support from within the French nation. The leaders of the various resistance movements were unknown internationally, however, so de Gaulle urged some former prewar political personalities to join the CNR. (The Council was to have no executive or governmental responsibility, but was to help prepare for the government of France after the defeat of Germany.) In Paris, May 1943, the first

meeting of the CNR was held with one representative attending from each of the eight resistance movements and six prewar non-fascist political parties, including the SFIO and the PCF. These representatives passed a unanimous resolution cancelling the acts of Vichy, entrusting de Gaulle with the management of the nation's affairs and leaving military concerns to the direction of General Giraud. Most important, however, was the Programme of the CNR, completed in March 1944. Reflecting a predominantly Socialist influence, the Programme served as the "ideological foundation-stone" for the Fourth Republic (i.e. there were those who distrusted de Gaulle and who subsequently insisted that, before authority could be surrendered to de Gaulle, the postwar constitution must assure the application of the CNR Programme).¹²

A month after the formation of the CNR, de Gaulle founded the French Committee of National Liberation (CFLN). This committee, based in Algiers, was recognized by the Allies a year later as the de facto civilian government of France. One of the first acts of the CFLN was to declare null and void the 1939 dissolution of the PCF. (It is interesting to note that the Comintern had been dissolved just one month prior to this declaration.) No Communists were invited to sit on the CFLN. Twenty-seven Communists did participate, however, in the long-range planning activities of the Consultative Assembly, also set up by de Gaulle in Algiers.¹³ Maurice Thorez had no part in any of the pre-Liberation planning groups, for he had left his military unit in June

of 1941 as the Germans advanced on Konibychev, USSR. After defecting to the Soviet Union, he asked to be allowed to return clandestinely to France in order to direct the Resistance effort, but Stalin refused, saying he did not want to complicate his relations with the Allies. In February 1944, Thorez asked the CFLN delegate in Moscow for authorization to go to Algiers, but the Committee refused. Thorez did not return to France until after the French government's amnesty decree of October 1944.¹⁴

Finally, in April 1944, two PCF members were invited to join the executive leadership of the CFLN and become the ministers of Air and State. This action did not indicate, however, any increase in trust between the Gaullists and the Communists. This is evidenced in the Vercors incident of July 1944. Several hundred resistance fighters (many of them Franc Tireurs et Partisans [FTP] Communists) were killed in the battle of Vercors because no reinforcements arrived from either London or Algiers as promised. The Minister of Air admonished the CFLN for its failure to help the resistants; he was replaced two months later.¹⁵

In June 1944 after the Normandy invasion, the PCF began establishing Patriotic Militias within France that were charged with executing reprisals against collaborators. According to some reports, the Communists, as they took control of many areas (especially in the south of France where they dominated the military liberation effort),¹⁶ would effectuate a massive "balancing of the books": taking

some 30-40,000 lives - undoubtedly including "armistice" army officers.¹⁷ Author John Ambler states that noncommunist members of the French Forces of the Interior (FFI) often feared their FTP counterparts. Illustrative of this is a report made during the war by two regular army colonels who were in charge of some FFI units. They relate how these units rushed to be the first to occupy the city of Bordeaux as it was evacuated by the Germans in August 1944; the reason for their haste? They wanted to prevent nearby FTP units from arriving first, for there were suspicions that the Communists were under orders to establish a "Soviet Republic of Southern France."¹⁸ (The PCF does not appear to have received any such orders, however.) Simon Serfaty estimates that during the Second World War, one half of the French military and one third of the civilian resistants were PCF members or affiliated adherents.¹⁹

V. PARTNERS IN GOVERNMENT (1944-1947)

A. PARTNERS

As World War II drew to a close, Stalin above all wanted stability. Therefore he endorsed de Gaulle's leadership in postwar France and told the PCF to restrain its militants' revolutionary ambitions.¹ On September 10, 1944, just after the Liberation, the Secretary General of the reconstituted SFIO, Daniel Mayer, proposed the SFIO and the PCF join in a comité d'entente. The Socialists knew that the Communists had emerged from the war as the most popular political party and that the only way to obtain a share of power was to ally with the PCF. Delegations from the two parties met in December 1944 at PCF headquarters in Paris. A permanent comité d'entente was created. But as soon as the SFIO saw the PCF plans calling for a United Labor Party, which would essentially fuse the SFIO into the PCF, the Socialists grew uneasy, and the demise of the entente was already apparent by January 1945. The split between the two parties widened with the 1945 events in Poland (i.e. the absorption of the Socialist party by the Communists) and the return to Paris of Leon Blum, who still had great influence with the SFIO. Daniel Mayer declared there could be no unity as long as the PCF remained "absolutely faithful to the USSR"²; and Blum wanted the Socialists to build a third political force, one situated between the Gaullist and Communist extremes. In his words,

Without socialism, democracy is imperfect. Without democracy, socialism is helpless.³

Moreover, Leon Blum advocated a strictly pro-Western, pro-American foreign policy for France.

The October 1945 referendum concerning the formation of a Constituent Assembly resolved many questions. Ninety-six percent of the population voted to abandon the old Third Republic (which had led the nation into such disaster) and, to draw up a new constitution. Three parties were given three-quarters of all the votes: the SFIO, the PCF and the Christian Democratic Popular Republican Movement. This was a great victory for the French Communists: French society apparently agreed with the main PCF thesis that the bourgeoisie (most of which had rallied to the Vichy government) was not qualified to reassume leadership of the country it had betrayed.⁴ The tripartite coalition soon unanimously selected de Gaulle to be President of the new Provisional Government. He was recognized by all as the only possible candidate if political crisis were to be avoided. The PCF demanded representation in one of the three key ministries: National Defense, Foreign Affairs or the Interior. De Gaulle refused,⁵ but he did agree to make Thorez Minister of State and name another Communist, Charles Tillon, Minister of Air. In this capacity, Tillon had complete control of all civil and military aviation activities. He was entrusted with the rebuilding of not only the French aircraft industry, but also the French Air Force. Since all of the Air Force's aircraft had been destroyed at the beginning of the war, Tillon did not

dispose of a great arsenal of weapons, but he was in charge of all French Air Force personnel, equipment and facilities. Although there was unlimited opportunity and requirement for innovative, constructive action, Tillon apparently wished to do nothing. It was apparently his deliberate intent to delay as long as possible the rebuilding of French air power. The Ministry of Air, like the other Communist ministries (i.e. National Economy, Industrial Production and Labor) were purposely paralyzed by the mass influx of Communists to positions at every level of responsibility. During this period, those aircraft that were available were usually so poorly maintained that they were chronically non-operational. Due to Tillon's ministry (1944-1947), the rebuilding of the French Air Force was retarded by at least four years.

Tillon's efforts to thwart the postwar recovery of French air power succeeded.⁶

Ronald Tiersky describes another facet of French aerospace activity during this period:

In the aircraft industry, the large Gnome-et-Rhone Company had been nationalized, falling under the jurisdiction of the Air Force Minister, Charles Tillon. Tillon appointed Marcel Weil, a Communist, as Director General of the company, and from this position Weil was able to pack the entire administration of the enterprise with Party militants. Moreover, Communists were also given preference in employment. Often, job openings in the aircraft industry were advertised only in L'Humanité, Franc-Tireur, Paris-Liberté, and Ce Soir - all Communist sympathizer papers. This led to a situation in which a large majority of the working force in the aircraft factories was either Communist or dependent on the Party for job security. And even after Weil was replaced, Communist labor inspectors in the plants often refused to sanction dismissals...⁷

The first draft constitution for postwar France appeared to be the product of Socialist and Communist collaboration, and it envisaged an extremely weak and purely ceremonial role for the President of the Republic. In disgust, de Gaulle resigned from office in January 1946 and left the three parties to manage the government by themselves. The PCF at first supported Maurice Thorez as candidate for the vacant Presidency. The MRP adamantly refused the idea, so an innocuous statesman, Felix Gouin, assumed the title of President of the Constituent Assembly. His caretaker government consisted of, among others, six PCF and seven SFIO ministers. The PCF had obtained such positions as Minister of War Veterans and War Victims, Minister of Reconstruction and ⁸Urbanism. Thorez became Vice-President of the Council.

The first draft constitution was rejected by the French people on May 5, 1946, and a Second Constituent Assembly was voted into office: once again a tripartite situation. The PCF received seven ministries in exchange for its congenial cooperation with the system. The second draft constitution was an SFIO-MRP collaborative effort, giving more power to the President. It was passed by a slim majority of the voters on October 13, 1946. The elections for the first National Assembly of the Fourth Republic registered the continuing postwar decline of the SFIO and the rising popularity of the PCF. (See Appendix I) Riding on this wave of good feeling, Maurice Thorez became a candidate for President of the Provisional Government in the November 1946 elections.

The position would have only been a one-month caretaker position, until January presidential elections could be held to determine the leader of the new Republic. But the Communists coveted the transitory post because of the amazing precedent that could be set: a Communist holding France's highest office. Thorez strove primarily to prove that long-term cooperation between Communists and other progressive forces, such as the SFIO, was possible. He wanted to convey an image of the PCF as a peace party, one that was against the division of Europe into two power blocs. In trying to reassure the nation about the PCF's plans for France, Thorez became the first French Communist to ever speak seriously of a French "national" road to socialism:

We have expressly repeated, in the course of our electoral campaign, that we do not ask of the people a mandate to implement a strictly communist program...We have proposed a program of democracy and national reconstruction, acceptable to all republicans...It is evident that the Communist Party in its governmental activity and within the cadre of the parliamentary system which it helped to reestablish, will constrain itself strictly to the democratic program which has won it the confidence of the popular masses.

The progress of democracy across the world...enables one to consider other roads to socialism than that followed by the Russian communists. In any case, the road is necessarily different for each country. We have always believed and declared that the French people, rich in a glorious tradition, would find its own way toward greater democracy, progress and social justice.⁹

Thorez lost the bid for the Presidency, and Leon Blum became President of the Provisional Government in December 1946. He dutifully resigned in January 1947 to make way for the Socialist Vincent Auriol, the first President of the Fourth Republic. Paul Ramadier (SFIO) was named Prime Minister and

nine ministries were given to SFIO members, five to the MRP and five to the PCF. Thorez was once again Minister of State and Vice-President of the Cabinet, Tillon was Minister of Reconstruction, and other Communists were given charge of Labor and Social Security, and Public Health. Most significant, however, was the nomination of a Communist to the Ministry of National Defense.¹⁰ The PCF had finally obtained one of the three key governmental seats, but in this government the organizational framework allowed ministers very little policy-making power. Furthermore, the PCF ministers remained in office for only six months. International crises and domestic turmoil put tremendous pressure on the multi-party governmental arrangement. When, in May 1947, the PCF ministers dissented against the government's economic policy, the Socialist prime minister decided to insist on the principle of cabinet solidarity and therefore used the opportunity to dismiss the Communist ministers from government. (The PCF has remained in opposition ever since.) The SFIO, after experiencing some heated internal party debate, opted to remain in government instead of forming a Leftist opposition. The SFIO remained in government until 1951.

B. FOREIGN POLICY

1944 to 1947 was more than a period of transition from provisional to permanent government, however. More significantly, it was one of transition from postwar to cold war politics. The way in which the temporary governmental officials during this period responded to the international

crises facing them was to influence the whole future of the Fourth Republic. History does not wait for the right man to be in the right office at the right time.

1. Algeria

Immediately after World War II had ended, the French government sent troops into the colonies to quiet the restlessness of indigenous nationalists. The Program of the CNR had stipulated that after the war, political, social and economic rights were to be extended to native and colonial populations.¹¹ But this meant only that these populations should be accorded a certain degree of autonomy of rule, not independence from France. In Algeria, on VE Day 1945, there was a nationalist uprising in Setif; it was brutally put down by the European-French colons (colonists). In 1947, Socialist prime minister Ramadier was able to persuade parliament to pass the Algerian Statute, a rather liberal document which made some concessions to Moslem demands but unequivocally reaffirmed the existence of French Algeria.¹² The SFIO supported the passage of the Statute, but the PCF abstained, believing it did not go far enough toward granting independence.¹³ For the French colons, however, it went too far, and they refused to implement the document. From 1947 until 1958, it was Algiers that gave orders to Paris.¹⁴ Charles Micaud describes the mood of the French nation in the immediate postwar period as follows:

An atmosphere of unreality bathed the whole issue. Algeria was French. Pacification was not war. Only a handful of fanatics were responsible for all the difficulties. Normalcy was expected to continue. Few had the bad taste to point out the costs and consequences of this course...¹⁵

2. Indochina

In Indochina, the Viet Minh were watching the French election returns with great expectation. When a predominantly leftist Constituent Assembly was voted into power in October 1945, the Viet Minh had great hopes that such a political group would grant Vietnamese demands for independence, military and diplomatic autonomy and representation in the United Nations.

Interestingly, the Viet Minh had decided to place their faith in support from the SFIO rather than the PCF. This might be explained by the PCF's unusual behavior with regard to the Algerian situation. The PCF was supporting the theoretical cause of nationalist movements, but adamantly refusing to become associated with any violence-prone organization. Power was to be acquired, but by peaceful law-abiding means; and this was to be true for Communists both at home and abroad.¹⁶

Former French Communist Annie Kriegel explains that the PCF's original goal had been to take full control of France after the war. The Communists were thwarted in their plans, however, by de Gaulle's successful tactic of disbanding the Popular Militias and merging them together with all the other military organizations within France. To use the words of Charles Tillon, "That was how the party lost all its heavy armament and therefore all possibility of serious action."¹⁷ Kriegel further explains that the party recognized the undisputed national appeal of de Gaulle and, having

received Stalin's order for stability, it decided to support the man and participate in the government. These were seen as the best guarantees of preventing American incursion into France (another primary concern voiced by Stalin). The PCF therefore became an active and vocal opposition within the government, but not a challenge ("an alternative") to the system itself.¹⁸ Correspondingly, Thorez declared in July 1945, "I say it frankly...it is impossible to approve the smallest strike."¹⁹ Stability was to be maintained for the security of international socialism; the Americans were not to be given the opportunity to expand their influence by profiting from any internal insurrections in France. Thus, after the Algerian Setif uprising in 1945, the North African branch of the PCF declared that

those responsible for organizing this unrest must be immediately punished - quickly and without pity; the instigators of the revolt must be shot, along with their henchmen who led the uprising.²⁰

The conflict in Indochina began in 1946 during the short one-month government of Leon Blum. Shortly before the outbreak of war, a Vietnamese delegation arrived in France to negotiate with the SFIO and the PCF at Fontainebleau. The French Left was very amenable to talks with the Viet Minh, and when the French military leaders in Indochina heard of the latest Leftist victory at the polls (November 1946), they became worried. The Left, and the SFIO in particular, was no friend of the military. The Socialists saw no reason for France to have a large military: there was not to be another war. Therefore, both reserve and active-duty Army forces

should be reduced as quickly as possible.²¹ According to evidence provided by George Kelly, the French High Commissariat in Saigon feared that the new Leftist French government would turn a deaf ear to military interpretations of the Indochinese situation; and so it prepared itself to take advantage of the first provocation in order to present the Parisian politicians with a fait accompli: a war already in progress. The French military got their chance on November 20th, and official reports of the incident (describing the excessive belligerency of the commanding officer involved and the full-scale indiscriminate assault on the civilian population) were intentionally delayed in transit to Paris in order that the High Commissariat's representative would have sufficient time to favorably condition French public and political opinion. Even Ho Chi Minh's telegram containing peace proposals was intentionally delayed en route and did not reach Blum until after the war was well under way.²²

During the first six months of 1947 the Minister of Defense was the Communist Francois Billoux. Even so, the PCF was frustrated in its inability to stop the war, since the only actual power that could be wielded by the Minister was to encourage the PCF deputies to recommend negotiations with the Vietnamese²³ and to withhold their vote of confidence from the government's colonial policy.²⁴

Once again, the PCF had adhered faithfully to Stalin's order for stability at all cost. A further illustration of the French Communists' dogged loyalty to Kremlin desires during

the postwar period is seen in an incident that took place in October 1947. At the founding meeting of Stalin's Cominform (the replacement of the Comintern), the Yugoslavian Communist Party denounced the French Communists as opportunists. Therefore, in 1948, when Yugoslavia's Tito was expelled by Stalin from the international communist community, the PCF was among the first to second the expulsion and one of the firmest pro-Stalinist parties in the Cominform.²⁵ Thorez was still heading the French party, and the Moscow line was therefore still the guide for PCF action (Thorez's remarkable "French road to socialism" notwithstanding). America's Dean Acheson recognized this pro-Soviet character of the postwar PCF. He warned,

With four Communists in the Cabinet, one of them Minister of Defense, with Communists...infiltrating government offices, factories and the armed services, with nearly a third of the electorate voting Communist, and with economic conditions worsening,²⁶ the Russians could pull the plug any time they chose.

VI. OPPONENTS (1947-1958)

The SFIO spent the next twelve years either participating in or giving out-of-government support to most of the Fourth Republic cabinets and their prime ministers. As for the PCF, it remained in official opposition, obediently adhering to the requisites of Soviet foreign policy. This period will be described in the light of SFIO and PCF policy positions on major international relations issues. In addition, the foreign policy of Francois Mitterrand will be discussed since he is the current leader of the French Socialist Party (PS) and a potential prime minister of France. During the 1950s he led a small Radical-affiliated party: the Democratic and Socialist Union of the Resistance or UDSR. His affiliation with the Socialist Party will be discussed at length in a later chapter.

A. FOUNDATIONS

1. 1948

On July 7, 1948, the SFIO approved the adoption of the Marshall Plan for France.¹ The PCF, although in opposition, also approved of the Plan, believing France could accept U.S. aid without risking any political involvements.²

The SFIO also approved the London Agreements (creating the Federal Republic of Germany) and agreed to allow the industrial Ruhr valley to be associated with the West German state.³ The PCF, on the other hand, opposed the creation of

a West German republic and thought the Ruhr should be under international, not German, control. (This was also the Gaullist position.)⁴

Both the SFIO and the PCF opposed the July 1948 military appropriations bill; they demanded instead that cuts be made in the military budget.⁵ (The SFIO would not ask for another cut in military spending, however, until 1954.)

2. 1949

On 27 July 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty was ratified by the French parliament. The Socialists by this time had become "enthusiastic Americanophiles"; Annie Kriegel explains that with the threat of the Cold War and the influence of Leon Blum, the SFIO had developed a political culture closely akin to that of the United States: antifascism, anti-communism and optimistic idealism.⁶ The PCF, as could be expected, objected violently to French membership in the "warmongering" NATO pact.⁷ The vehemence of their response is evidenced in these two official PCF declarations:

The French people do not accept the disappearance of their right to reparations from Germany. They do not accept being made an ally of West Germany in order to make war on socialist countries. That which Hitler, with Petain and Laval, failed to obtain will not now be obtained by the American capitalists, with de Gaulle and Blum: the people of France will not, will never make war on the Soviet Union...⁸

The second of these declarations was made by Maurice Thorez on February 22, 1949:

The enemies of the people believe they can embarrass us by asking the following question: "What would you do if the Red Army occupied Paris?" Here is our response:

1. The Soviet Union has never, and could never find itself in the position of being an aggressor against any country whatsoever. A socialist country by definition cannot practice a policy of aggression or war; those are the policies of imperialist powers. The Soviet Army, the heroic army of the defense of Stalingrad, has never attacked any nation. By fighting Hitler's Germany, she accomplished her glorious mission as Liberator of the People...
2. Our position is based on facts...These facts are: the active collaboration of the French government with Anglo-Saxon aggressive policies of imperialism, the presence of a foreign military headquarters in Fontainebleau, the transformation of our country and French Overseas Territories into bases for aggression against the USSR and Popular Democratic nations.
3. Since the question has been asked, let us clearly answer with this: if the common efforts of all Frenchmen, robbed of their freedom and peace, were not able to bring our country back into the camp of democracy and peace, if our people were then to be dragged against its will into an anti-Soviet war, and if under these conditions the Soviet Army, defending itself having to pursue the aggressors even into our territory, the workers, the people of France, could they behave any differently towards the Soviet Army than the workers and peoples of Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, etc?⁹

However, the PCF later approved the creation of the Warsaw Pact.¹⁰

3. 1950-1951

By 1950 the Stalinist era of "stability at all cost" was over; Stalin himself had recently challenged the status quo in the Far East by encouraging the North Korean communists in their struggle against the Western-backed South Koreans. The Korean War caused Cold War tensions to reach new heights. The French Socialists supported a bill instituting the draft for 18 months of compulsory military service. They also voted in favor of a military budget proposal for the rearmament of France. Furthermore, they approved of Rene Plevén's

plan to build a European army. When, at the end of 1951, however, Pleven called for a tax increase to support French rearmament and the Pleven Plan, the SFIO abstained.¹¹ Needless to say, the Communists opposed the 18-month service bill,¹² the rearmament of France and the building of a European army.¹³ The PCF chastized the Socialists with statements like

Hitler and Goebbels are dead, but thanks to...Guy Mollet, their spirit will live again in a new Nazi headquarters and a rebuilt Wehrmacht.¹⁴

4. 1952-1953

During 1952 the Socialists continued to support the idea of a European Defense Community (the EDC being a further elaboration of Pleven's plan), and they decided to vote for increased taxes to support French foreign policy goals. Simultaneously, however, the Communists and Gaullists were voicing unconditional opposition to the EDC¹⁵ and to the installation of U.S. bases in France.¹⁶

B. RESOLUTIONS

Ever since the end of World War II and the beginning of the bi-polar, Cold War world, nationalistic movements in the colonies had come to be regarded by French colonialists and soldiers as fronts for communist aggression. The French military, so disgraced during the Second World War, was glad to have a mission once again, a reason for being and a high moral purpose. Therefore, throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, a sense of anticommunist mission was propagated by the Fifth Bureau of the Army, the office charged with psychological

activities.¹⁷ The soldier's fervent belief in the worth of his mission in the colonies can be seen in these words:

The French Army is the first army in the world which has agreed to fight on the ground of the human mind, on the ground chosen by the communist Revolution to destroy Western Civilization.¹⁸

1. Indochina

The war in Indochina raged from 1945 until 1954. Twenty thousand Frenchmen were killed in the nine-year battle.¹⁹ At home, the French public felt guilty, indifferent, hesitant about the proper policy to follow in pacifying the Far Eastern colonies; all they knew was that they wanted them to remain French.²⁰

In 1947, after the failure of the Fontainebleau negotiations with the Viet Minh, the SFIO declared it wanted no part of any war that supported the corrupt, although pro-French, Bao Dai regime.²¹ As the international atmosphere grew chillier, however, the Socialists relented and actually began voting in favor of bills increasing the strength of French military forces. At first, the war did not cost very much, and no French conscripts were sent to fight in Indochina. In 1951 however, a leading spokesman for the SFIO, Gaston Defferre, asked the government to reach a settlement with Ho Chi Minh before Red China should decide to intervene to "internationalize" the war; for, if that were to happen, "it is certain that all Southeast Asia would be open to the forces of invasion."²² The SFIO finally became openly hostile to the government's Indochina policy in October 1953.

Socialists had become concerned for the defense of France, for her army was so far away.

...soldiers know that there will be no French Army as long as the war lasts in Indochina, for it absorbs a third of our officers and half our NCOs.²³

In answer to the Socialist call for a negotiated settlement, Minister of Defense Pleven merely replied that military stability had to be established first.²⁴ This would have required sending French conscripts to the war - an act which the SFIO could not abide. Therefore the Socialists refused to support the March 1954 military budget. The French defeat at Dien Bien Phu occurred less than two months later and, in July 1954, the SFIO approved the Geneva partition of Indochina.²⁵

In 1953, Francois Mitterrand had been in favor of direct negotiations with Ho Chi Minh. He even published a book advocating an end to the Indochinese war. (His reasons were perhaps not entirely humanitarian, since he argued that if so much had not been wasted in Indochina, scarce resources could have been used towards developing the North African Maghreb into "France's California.")²⁶

As for the PCF, it was constant in its opposition to the Indochinese conflict. In 1950 Thorez addressed the PCF party congress with these words:

For three and a half years, an unjust war, a criminal war has been carried on against the people of Vietnam. This war of colonial plunder is sowing devastation and death on a people who ask only to live in peace and fraternal union with the people of France.²⁷

In 1952, Communist parliamentary leader Jacques Duclos sent

a telegram to Ho Chi Minh, leader of the Viet Minh, congratulating him on his successes over the French and assuring him of PCF support in "this criminal war."²⁸ More specifically, it said:

The people of France, which fought yesterday and fights today against foreign occupation, understands and supports the struggle of the Vietnamese people for their freedom and independence. [The people of France] rise up against the continuation of the criminal war being waged on the Vietnamese people and being fought for goals contrary to the true interests of France.²⁹

Also in 1952, PCF deputy Billoux urged all French workers to interfere in the manufacture and transport of war materials. (One general officer at Dien Bien Phu blamed communist sabotage for the defective condition of motors, ball bearings, parachutes and other equipment being delivered to the front.)³⁰

The Communists further advocated immediate negotiations with the enemy. This at first ran headlong into government arguments that to speak of negotiations was "the surest means of raising the morale of the adversary and of demoralizing our own troops."³¹ (It will be remembered that the French government used this same argument against the Socialists during World War I.)

It is important to note that, whereas PCF deputies were arrested and tried for treason in 1939, PCF parliamentary members in the 1950s were not even censured for their outspoken antiwar propagandizing and sabotage activities, even though Prime Minister Pinay in 1952 did attempt to outlaw the party and failed.³² Public opinion and public leaders were

so divided on the subject of war goals in Indochina that a clear definition of treason was impossible.³³

2. Tunisia and Morocco

a. Tunisia

Nationalist uprisings began in Tunisia in January 1952. Francois Mitterrand was France's Minister of State in charge of Tunisian Affairs. The Tunisian reform question had been debated in parliament in June 1952, but all proposals were rejected by the Left as being insufficient.³⁴ It was incumbent upon Mitterrand, therefore, to draw up a set of French proposals likely to be accepted by the Tunisians as the basis for a settlement. It was the Mitterrand Plan that was ultimately accepted by the Tunisian nationalists in July of the same year. The plan granted the native population a considerable degree of autonomy while, at the same time, it safeguarded French rights in the country.³⁵ By July however, France had a new government and the new prime minister took no interest in Tunisian affairs, thus allowing the European-French community to resume its repressive tactics against the native populace.

b. Morocco

In September 1953, Mitterrand (now Minister-delegate to the Council of Europe) resigned from the government in protest over French policy in Northern Africa. Two weeks before Mitterrand's resignation, the Laniel government had allowed the Sultan of Morocco to be overthrown. Prime Minister Laniel reportedly had business ties with the Sultan's

opponents and therefore did not wish to antagonize them or impede their political activities.³⁶

c. Settlement

Mendes-France came to power in June 1954. During the campaign, he had promised a quick settlement of the Tunisian and Moroccan situations. The promise was kept. By August, programs for negotiating the internal sovereignty of Tunisia and Morocco had been approved by both the SFIO and the PCF.³⁷ (Tunisia and Morocco were finally granted total national independence in March 1956.)

3. EDC

The French National Assembly refused to ratify the European Defense Community Treaty on August 30, 1954. Some attribute the defeat to a preponderance of Gaullist influence in the Assembly. (The Gaullist party, the RPF, had received 20.4% of the national vote in the June 1951 legislative elections.)³⁸ The PCF, of course, was delighted with the defeat.³⁹ As for the SFIO, when the time came to actually ratify the treaty, the party split in half. The left wing of the SFIO, which had voted against the EDC, was expelled from the party,
⁴⁰ but was later invited to return.

However, the question of German rearmament was not settled by the defeat of the EDC. Alternatives were discussed among the NATO allies, and Great Britain and the U.S. warned Prime Minister Mendes-France that unless France cooperated, it could expect to be left isolated from the West. Mendes-France pleaded with parliament for French approval of the

London and Paris Agreements, which dealt with German rearmament and German integration into NATO, respectively.⁴¹ The Socialist vote was responsible for the passage of the London Agreements in October 1954. The subsequent Paris Agreements passed by a hair's breadth in December that same year: 287 to 260 - once again thanks primarily to Socialist support. (The PCF remained in firm opposition to all German rearmament schemes.)⁴²

C. TWILIGHT

The legislative elections of January 1956 were a victory for the Left. The Gaullist vote had declined to a mere 4.4%.⁴³ The PCF offered to form a Popular Front government with the SFIO, but the latter refused, preferring to ally with the moderate Radical and UDSR parties. Together the three parties formed the Front Républicain with a Socialist prime minister: Guy Mollet. This became the longest-lived cabinet of the Fourth Republic (January 1956 to June 1957). By the time Mollet and his government came to power, the left wing of the SFIO had succeeded in attracting a great number of Socialists to its Free Algeria stance. Initially, even the PCF declared its support for the Mollet government.⁴⁴

1. United Europe

The Socialists wanted a united Europe because it would mean quick economic expansion and a higher standard of living: a boon to democratic socialism and a hindrance to communism.⁴⁵ In 1951, they therefore voted for the Schuman Plan which led to the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community.

In 1956, they gave their approval to EURATOM and, in 1957, they supported the creation of the European Economic Community.

The French Communists, on the other hand, opposed all these measures.⁴⁶ They had no desire to build an anticommunist, capitalist Europe. They preferred to develop an alliance of Communists, anti-Germans, pacifists, internationalists, Jacobin patriots and technocrats who could all work together to make France strong in the face of competition.⁴⁷

From 1954 to 1956, Mitterrand was not a proponent of United Europe policies. George Kelly explains that during this period France was divided into two schools of national strategic thought: the neo-Carolingian and the neo-Roman. The neo-Carolingians, like de Gaulle, attempted to recover French grandeur and leadership in Europe. Mitterrand, however, had had a great deal of experience working with the problems of French Union (i.e. keeping France and her colonial empire together). This experience led him into the neo-Roman school, which strove for a close entente between France and North Africa, whether it be by possession or association. (Since the neo-Roman school focused on the importance of the Mediterranean, it also advocated closer ties with Spain and Italy.)⁴⁸

2. Suez

In 1955, official French government propaganda began suggesting that the Egyptian government was aiding the rebels in Algeria. When Guy Mollet became prime minister, he attempted a rapprochement with Egypt, which claimed to be a neutral country; Mollet's attempts failed. In July 1956,

Nassar announced his intention to nationalize the Suez Canal. With the link between Arab nationalism and communism already well established in the minds of European Frenchmen, pan-Arabism was now widely seen as a new threat to the liberty of the world: theocratic and totalitarian regimes were trying to take control of the Mediterranean.⁴⁹ Mollet declared "one French division in Egypt is worth four divisions in North Africa."⁵⁰

The PCF refused to back Mollet's verbal and armed attack on Egypt. Socialists, however, were in the front line of the anti-Arab nationalist movement. Socialist Minister of Foreign Affairs Christian Pineau invoked the memory of the consequences which befell France after she had failed to stop the German remilitarization of the Rhineland and had yielded to Hitler's deception at Munich. Socialist Minister of France Overseas (Gaston Deferre) stressed the impact Nassar's actions could have on Black Africa, and Francois Mitterrand (then Keeper of the Seals) compared the nationalization of the canal to Hitler's aggression against Czechoslovakia.⁵¹

Although the Franco-British-Israeli attempt to recapture the Suez Canal failed (due in part to Soviet threats and American pressure), the French military was convinced more than ever before that

The Suez affair [was] the supreme example of international communism's new strategy. It was by the intermediary of nationalist movements, and in particular of Arab nationalism, that the western positions would be breached, undermined and finally destroyed. In the field vacated by the retreat of the western powers communism would one day stretch far and wide, whenever the weakness of its adversaires permitted or, simply, whenever the moment was deemed ripe.⁵²

3. Partisan Developments

a. SFIO

As demonstrated in the above discussion, the SFIO was one of the major governmental parties in the Fourth French Republic. Although Leon Blum continued to exercise a great deal of influence in the party until his death in 1950, the secretary general of the SFIO throughout the immediate postwar and Cold War period was Guy Mollet. Although the party possessed some of the nation's most astute politicians, as evidenced by the frequent presence of Socialists in the Fourth Republic cabinets, public support for the SFIO steadily declined between 1945 and 1956 (from 23.8% to 14.9% of the votes, respectively).⁵³ The party itself suffered a serious split when its left wing refused to support German rearmament. The left wing did not seek a coalition with another party, however, and the schism remained a purely internal party dispute.⁵⁴ The Algerian problem had become the preoccupying political concern by 1957 when the Mollet government was ousted from power due to its inability to find a satisfactory solution. In 1958, as the Algerian crisis reached its zenith, Guy Mollet announced SFIO support for Charles de Gaulle's return to power. At this, the party's left wing seceded from the SFIO to form its own splinter group, the Autonomous Socialist Party (PSA, later becoming the United Socialist Party or PSU). Neither the SFIO nor the PSA gave in to the PCF requests for an alliance against de Gaulle in the 1958 elections.⁵⁵

b. PCF

After its expulsion from the 1947 Ramadier government, the PCF remained firmly in opposition for the duration of the Fourth Republic. The only government it even marginally supported was the Socialist one of Mollet, from 1956 to 1957. Due perhaps to its non-participation policy, the PCF was able to maintain a steady average of 26% of the popular vote throughout the 1945 to 1956 period.⁵⁶

An opportunity for fundamental change in PCF policy occurred in 1956. When Khrushchev read his February 1956 secret report on Stalin to the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU, a revolution was forced upon all the parties of the international communist community. The content of Khrushchev's report and new policy program were not known until the U.S. State Department published the document in June of the same year. The PCF was shocked both by the discrediting of Stalin and by the new program calling for (1) peaceful coexistence between East and West, communist and capitalist, and (2) many roads to socialism.

Maurice Thorez had always faithfully adhered to Stalin's principle of democratic centralism and proletarian internationalism. Khrushchev's new directives presented the PCF Secretary-General with a major, personal challenge to his own credibility as leader of the French communist movement. Now, for once, the party, which had become such a master of effectuating stunning policy changes in a minimum amount of time, was momentarily stymied. The Italian

Communist Party (PCI) provided an interesting contrast. Togliatti, the PCI's Secretary General, immediately gave voice to a novel idea: polycentrism, that is, no leading party at all, with all parties being independent and equal.⁵⁷

Thorez preferred to refer to the heretical secret speech as "the report attributed to Comrade Khrushchev" as he sought a way to implement the new directives as slowly and gradually as possible. Falling back on his comfortable Soviet cushion for support in his time of trial, Thorez interpreted the new instructions as: the cause of the Soviet Union is still the cause of all the international workers' movements; it is just that one must recognize the fallibility of individual leaders and refrain from idolizing any one of them.⁵⁸ The CPSU liked this interpretation of its new party policy and it encouraged other parties to follow suit.⁵⁹ But Thorez was not to have it so easy. The Italian ideas had captured the imagination of PCF intellectuals such as Jean-Paul Sartre, who had already set about popularizing Togliatti's polycentrism⁶⁰ and planning for the PCF to become a truly French party.⁶¹

The CPSU had told all parties to seek peaceful means to power.⁶² This was interpreted to mean that alliances could and should be made with social democratic parties like the SFIO, in order to gain parliamentary strength.⁶³ Togliatti embellished these ideas with the notion that "there is neither a guiding state nor a guiding party."⁶⁴ But the Soviet intervention of Hungary in 1956 served as strong warning to other

parties to refrain from taking the notion of party independence too far. Thorez was in the forefront encouraging the USSR to repress Nagy's "revisionism" and also Gomulka's "national communism," for such repression would demonstrate to the nascent revisionists within the PCF the error of their ways.⁶⁵ At first, the PCF suffered only minimal effects from the Hungarian invasion; only one party intellectual was expelled and only one prominent member resigned.⁶⁶ Among the rank and file, the argument was circulated that if the bourgeois were feeling sorry for the Hungarians, then these must have been enemies of Communism.⁶⁷

When the Algerian crisis peaked in May of 1958, the PCF at first tried to form an alliance with the SFIO against de Gaulle's return to power. When the SFIO refused, the PCF proceeded to call de Gaulle a fascist and staunchly oppose his reorganization of the French governmental system. (Great was the PCF's bewilderment when the Soviet Union suddenly voiced its support for the General, and his foreign policy proposals in particular.) At the polls later that year (1958), the PCF suffered a 30% decline in voter support and, due to the new electoral law, lost 70% of its seats in Parliament.⁶⁸

VII. ECLIPSE (1958-1972)

For fourteen years beginning in 1958, the two major leftist parties in France disappeared into political opposition. The charisma, arrogance and power of de Gaulle had returned to the French political stage. Once again he alone appeared capable of rescuing France in a time of crisis. Almost immediately upon being made Premier of the 1958 emergency government, de Gaulle began consolidating his position by initiating a reorganization of the French government. A new constitution was written, permitting the populace to permanently rally around le grand Charles. Guy Mollet, the Secretary General of the SFIO, initially supported de Gaulle; but that was when he thought they had a common interest: a French Algeria, or perhaps more accurately said, an Algeria for France. Once he realized the nature of de Gaulle's policy toward Algeria, he withdrew his support of the government and joined the ranks of the opposition. But it should be noted that this was not a move toward union with the PCF.

A. RAPPROCHEMENT

In 1960, just as Thorez was coming under increasing attack from his party for his autocratic ways and for the party's weakness, Khrushchev and the CPSU made a dramatic shift back to a hardline, Cold War stance. Thorez could not have asked for more. The conflict with Red China and the

U-2 incident had sparked an order from Khrushchev for a return to anti-revisionist, neo-Stalinist politics. Thorez, who had continued to condemn Togliatti, and Tito, was given a warm welcome to the Soviet camp.² An old-fashioned Stalinist, democratic-centralist party like the PCF was a rare sight indeed as Khrushchev looked around at the communist world split by revisionism and Maoism.

By May 1961, the PCF had expelled its dissidents; Thorez-protégé Georges Marchais became a member of the Politburo and Thorez heir apparent Waldeck Rochet was made Deputy Secretary-General to assist the Secretary General who was ailing.³ Thorez opposed de Gaulle's personal power as President and encouraged the PCF in 1962 to form "the most diverse forms of the united front" in order to increase its electoral power.⁴ Therefore in November of that year, the PCF persuaded Mollet to cooperate in a united electoral tactic against the Gaullist party. France operates its elections on a two-ballot system. The two parties agreed that, if after the first ballot, the candidate from the other party were running stronger than one's own party candidate, the weaker party's candidate would withdraw from the race in the second ballot, and all the members of his party would be urged to vote for the stronger party's candidate. (The PCF-SFIO tactic succeeded, with the PCF quadrupling its number of seats in parliament and the SFIO increasing its representation by one-half).⁵ This was the first cooperative electoral action taken by the two leftist groups since the end of World War II.

From 1963 to 1965, Socialist Gaston Deferre attempted to unite all non-communist Left parties into a common Federation, and then unite this group with the French political Center parties. His plan was for the PCF to be forced into an alliance with the Gaullists for the 1965 presidential elections, which was supposed to work to the detriment of both.⁶ The union of the non-communist Left was accomplished on 10 September, 1965 with the creation of the Federation of the Democratic and Socialist Left (FGDS). But Defferre's plan ended there, for SFIO Secretary General Mollet refused to let his party become affiliated with the political Center. Mollet found support for his position from the leader of another party recently absorbed into the FDGS: Francois Mitterrand of the Convention of Republican Institutions (CIR). Since March of 1965, the CIR had been trying to form an alliance with the PCF. Mollet and Mitterrand, however, intended for such an alliance to be purely temporary and for electoral purposes only.⁷ Waldeck-Rochet was Secretary General of the PCF by this time and, at first, the PCF tried to insist on the agreement of a common program before the elections. In the face of stubborn Socialist opposition, however, the Communists reluctantly agreed to the FGDS terms.⁸

The PCF had not wanted to put up a presidential candidate of its own because of fears that it would indicate de facto Communist approval of de Gaulle's system of direct presidential elections.⁹ With the PCF's support, therefore, Mitterrand (who was now leader of the FGDS) could present

himself as the candidate of the united Left against de Gaulle in the December 1965 elections. The PCF proved to be "a loyal and active ally" and Mitterrand garnered a final 45.5% of the popular vote.¹⁰

The significance of the 1965 presidential elections is twofold. On the one hand, Mitterrand's near success indicated to the French government that a Left-extreme Left coalition could become a majority force in France. And on the other hand, the PCF's loyal support of a presidential candidate of its own choosing marked the first departure of French Communists from an officially declared Soviet line: the Soviets had openly stated its support for the candidacy of de Gaulle.¹¹

Annie Kriegel explains that with the advent of Waldeck-Rochet as the head of the PCF, the dual nature of the French party became apparent. The party is at once a member of the international communist movement and the self-proclaimed leader of the French working class.¹² In matters concerning international relations and the creation of the proper international atmosphere for the growth of the communist movement, the French Communists abdicated all original authority to the wiser judgment of the Soviet Union. After all, the USSR was one of the two great superpowers; it was a leader whose superior knowledge and interpretation of the international situation as it pertained to the greater communist fraternity was not to be contested by a mere national branch of the universal Communist movement. In domestic affairs, however,

the PCF (under the influence of Waldeck Rochet) had begun claiming its right to determine policy pertaining to the French working class. After all, they were a party of Frenchmen and they could discern much more accurately than a Russian the desires and needs of the French proletariat. I believe it was in this spirit, therefore, that the Waldeck-Rochet leadership of the PCF decided to support the French Leftist candidate in 1965 rather than the Soviet-designated de Gaulle: it was deemed to be a domestic affair.

On April 22, 1967, Leonid Brezhnev reportedly made the following statement during a private conversation with East European leaders Ulbricht and Gomulka. Arguing in favor of the contemporary Soviet policy towards non-Communist regimes, Brezhnev is quoted as saying:

...take de Gaulle. Have we not succeeded, at no risk to ourselves, in driving a breach through the imperialist camp? De Gaulle is our enemy and we are well aware of it. The French Communist Party was narrowminded enough to try to stir us up against de Gaulle for their own particular interests. But look at our achievements! We have weakened the American position in the heart of Europe and this weakening will continue. De Gaulle is a sly old fox. He is aiming for mastery in Europe for himself and in opposition to us. But here we must be flexible. De Gaulle has virtually no chance of realizing his concept of Europe because the other West European countries are too powerful and they would never allow it. But look at the balance-sheet from our point ¹³ of view, Comrades. Isn't this a success for our policy?

Brezhnev is said to have become so excited during these remarks that he slapped his thigh several times, saying "to the Devil with those parties that set themselves up as our mentors!"

In January 1966, immediately following the December elections, Waldeck-Rochet renewed contact with Mollet, asking

once again for the formulation of a joint governmental program. Two months later, in an effort to increase its credibility with the SFIO, the Central Committee of the PCF issued a statement affirming the right of other political parties to exist after the establishment of socialism.¹⁵ Later the same week, Waldeck Rochet said that

With the passage to socialism, the aim is to reinforce and democratize...the exercise of freedom of thought, freedom of assembly and association, of the right to strike and the whole of the political rights for the democratic parties in power, and for those who are in the opposition and accept and respect the laws of the new Socialist regime.¹⁶

Throughout the remainder of the year, debates appeared in the two parties' dailies (Le Populaire and L'Humanite) concerning such subjects as how to best guarantee the liberties won by the French in 1789 and 1848, and how to best achieve a transformation to socialism from a modern democratic state.¹⁷

During the long and serious discussions, the Socialists stressed they had no intention of being submerged by the Communists into the kind of "socialist unity" that exists in Eastern Europe.¹⁸ Mitterrand describes the December 1966 decision of the FGDS to unite with the French Communist Party for the legislative elections of 1967:

Beginning of December 1966, the decision had at last been made by the executive committee of the Federation. It obviously had not been easy. The SFIO and the Convention of Republican Institutions...were ready to make the step. The Radical party had some difficulty in being convinced. But once agreement was reached, things went quickly. The first meeting between the two delegations (that of the Communist Party was headed by Waldick Rochet) took place at the Federation's headquarters on rue de Lille. The meeting proceeded to be conducted in an atmosphere of gravest seriousness. We had the feeling that we were living an important moment in the history of our times...

That day - 11 December - Began the irreversible march toward unity. There will certainly be stops and setbacks...but they will not be able to destroy it...¹⁹

The Left scored another victory at the polls in 1967. The union of the Left worked well. The FGDS obtained almost 20% of the vote and the PCF obtained a healthy 22.5% (which translated into 75% and 35% increases in parliamentary representation, respectively).²⁰ Ronald Tiersky maintains, however, that the PCF refused to withdraw in favor of the FGDS candidate in ten separate cases for fear the FGDS would win a majority and elect to ally with someone other than the PCF.²¹ However, it seems likely that the PCF did not feel ready to form a government with the FGDS since a fully elaborated program had not been agreed upon beforehand; the PCF did not wish to risk participation in and association with a leftist government whose programs were not necessarily going to be those preferred by the Communists.

Further progress was made on a common program in February 1968, when the FGDS and the PCF issued a document entitled The Common Declaration of the FGDS and PCF. Reportedly, the greatest disagreements encountered during the negotiations concerned the area of foreign policy: the FGDS advocated an economic and political unification of Europe and the PCF was against any "supranational authority dominated by huge capitalist forces."²² The Common Declaration ended with a statement expressing the hope that the two sides would try to resolve their differing points of view, "notably in questions of foreign policy."²³ (Prime Minister Georges

Pompidou denounced the Declaration as "a program of anarchy leading to dictatorship.")²⁴

The events of May 1968 temporarily disrupted the growing unity of the Left. Because the riots of the students and workers had been spontaneously generated (i.e. without any communist encouragement or direction), the PCF attempted to play the role of peace-keeper for the Fifth Republic by acting as a mediator between the government and the rioters. Their attempts failed, however, since the rioting crowds were not communists.²⁵ Mitterrand opted to take advantage of the situation. On May 28th, anticipating the defeat of de Gaulle's announced referendum on the crisis, Mitterrand announced that in view of the imminent resignation of de Gaulle, the Left was prepared to "assume its responsibilities."²⁶ This proved to be a tactical disaster for the Left. President de Gaulle decided to hold national elections instead. The population, convinced by government propaganda and Mitterrand's pronouncement that the rioting crowds were Communist-inspired, voted overwhelming support to the Gaullist party, which, just for the occasion, had been renamed Union for the Defense of the Republic (UDR). The FGDS received only 16.6% of the vote, while the PCF received a bare 20%.²⁷

The repercussions of the August 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia were also felt throughout the French Left. As a result of the June French elections and the August invasion, the entire Leftist movement in France broke apart and crumbled away into small individual parties, each vying for

the title of the "pure" socialist party. When de Gaulle unexpectedly resigned in April 1969, the Left was therefore totally unprepared.

By 1969, the PCF had a de facto new leader: Georges Marchais (Waldick-Rochet having taken ill in late 1968.) When Socialist Gaston Defferre presented himself as the "Leftist" candidate for President in the 1969 elections without having had any prior consultations with the PCF, Marchais is reported to have been furious. Seventy-year old Jacques Duclos became the Communist candidate and, although Pompidou eventually won the election, Duclos did receive 21.5% of the first ballot votes versus Defferre's meager 5%.²⁸ Noting this tremendous support for the PCF, the SFIO decided to resume negotiations for unity with the Communists. At the SFIO Party Congress in July 1969, Guy Mollet was replaced as Secretary General by an even more enthusiastic advocate of Leftist union: Alain Savary. The Socialist delegates to the Congress voted to change the name of the party from the anachronistic French Section of the Socialist International to the more modern Socialist Party (PS). Furthermore, they set up an Executive Committee to work on a Socialist Plan of Action based on the FGDS-PCF declaration of 1966.²⁹

Throughout 1970, Marchais and Savary worked together on the joint program. In June 1971, after inviting Mitterrand's party to join the PS, the Socialist Party congress voted Mitterrand its new Secretary General. On June 27, 1972, Mitterrand and Marchais announced their final agreement on a Common Program of Government.

B. DIPLOMACY AND DEFENSE

International relations had been the subject of considerable disagreement between the two parties during the negotiations for the Common Program of 1972.³⁰ In view of the PCF's traditional willingness to follow the Soviet lead in this domain, it should come as no surprise that throughout the 1960s the PCF meticulously adhered to the Soviets' line in international and defense matters.

1. Algeria

The problem of Algerian independence was the immediate cause for the death of the harried Fourth Republic and the birth of the Gaullist Fifth Republic. As discussed earlier, the conflict between Algerian nationalists and European-French colons originated in the immediate postwar period. After the colons refused to execute the 1947 Algerian Statute, the Paris government in 1948 sent Socialist Marcel Naegelen to be Governor-General in Algiers. His duty was to follow the provisions of the Statute and organize elections for the Algerian Assembly. Naegelen accomplished this, however, in such a way that, from then on, the extremely popular nationalist groups were allowed only minimal representation.³¹ By 1951, Socialists in Paris had heard reports of Naegelen's systematic falsification of election returns and were deplored his actions; he resigned later that year.³²

In December 1955 the French government decided that Algeria would no longer vote in French national elections.³³ Therefore, when the SFIO was elected to power in the legislative

elections of January 1956, the National Assembly contained no Algerian representatives. This was ironic and unfortunate since the SFIO had campaigned on the slogan "Peace in Algeria"; but how could it conclude a peace if there were no adequate means of communication with the enemy? War had been raging in Algeria ever since October 31, 1954. Nationalist forces were being led by the National Liberation Front (FLN) and after ten years of colon repression, there was little desire for talk. The newly-installed Socialist government in Paris, however, was hopeful that it could reach an agreement with the FLN. The French Socialists' proposal called for the election of a single Algerian assembly composed of equal numbers of French Moslems and French Europeans. In the new arrangement, the Paris government was to serve only as a mediator between the two equal sides of the Algerian Assembly. Prime Minister Mollet wanted first a cease fire, then elections and negotiations with the new, elected officials. Mollet's plan appealed to neither side, however. The colons were frightened by the term "one single and unique assembly," fearing that they would be irrevocably separated from France.

³⁴

The FLN wanted nothing short of independence.

In 1956, Mollet's representative in Algeria (Socialist Resident-General Robert Lacoste) began urging increased military operations. The French cabinet debated whether large reinforcements could be sent to Algeria while at the same time leaving room for negotiations. General André Zeller resigned as Chief of Staff, stating the fluctuations of the military

policy of successive cabinets did not permit him to fulfill his functions effectively.³⁵ Throughout 1956, Mollet arranged secret meetings between representatives from his government and the FLN in hopes of reaching some basis for a preliminary understanding.³⁶ The meetings were fruitless, however. The FLN reported to the United Nations that the Mollet government never offered anything more than administrative autonomy: instead of Algeria being governed like a collection of small departements, it would be one big French province.³⁷ This was far from a promise of independence.

After a year and a half in office, the Mollet government had nothing to show for the tremendous amounts of money and resources that had been spent on the war in Algeria. The French economy was dangerously weakened by the prolonged conflict. The Socialist government was finally voted out of office in May 1957. Debate continued on the Algerian problem and, in November 1957, the French National Assembly was asked to vote on the principle of a unique Algerian Assembly and the decentralization of Algeria into autonomous territories. The Socialists supported the idea,³⁸ but both the Right and the PCF opposed it.³⁹

Why did the French Communists refuse this 1957 plan for an end to the war? Why, if they opposed the plan, did they not make any stirring declarations in support of the FLN? The evolution of the PCF position vis-a-vis the Algerian independence movement is worthy of some special attention. There are a number of reasons why the PCF's Algerian and

Indochinese policies were markedly different. First, as mentioned in Chapter VI, the PCF initially was not able to support the Algerian nationalists because of Stalin's ban on Communist Party association with violent acts of any kind. Second, although by 1954 the party was able ideologically to support the armed revolt of the FLN, it was preoccupied with cultivating French domestic opposition to the German rearmament issue. The PCF wanted, above all, strong backing from the traditional, anti-German sector of the French populace; this latter group, however, also happened to support a French Algeria. Not wishing, therefore, to alienate new-found allies, the PCF and its affiliated Algerian Communist Party confined their remarks dealing with the FLN to such non-committal pronouncements as:

We are in favor of the existence of permanent, special, political, economic, and cultural ties between France and Algeria...[We] express our firm resolution to neglect nothing in our advance along the road that must end with a cease-fire in Algeria and lead to negotiations that will transform the Algerian people into friends and allies of the French people.⁴⁰

As Stalin had peripheral parties sacrifice themselves for the good of Russia, so Thorez felt the Algerians should realize the insignificance of their cause as compared to the greater one of defending France's strategic position in Europe and the world.⁴¹ Furthermore, he objected to their violent and terroristic tactics, for reasons all of his own:

If the FLN thinks that it's winning public opinion, it's mistaken; it turns opinion against itself...Such methods open the door to all sorts of provocations against us.⁴²

Third, the French Communists had begun to realize by 1957-1958 that, in spite of any fraternal desire the party might have to

help the FLN, a sizeable segment of the French proletariat was refusing to give up the idea that Algeria was French. Therefore, it must either openly oppose the government's concessions to the FLN (as it did in November 1957) or venture no further than a call for negotiations between the two sides (as it did in 1958); this latter was, of course, a pale substitute for a demand for unqualified military victory of the rebels over the French.⁴³

In 1959, the PCF Politburo condemned de Gaulle's declaration of the principle of self-determination for Algeria as a simple, ineffectual maneuver. A few days later, Khrushchev voiced approval of the Gaullist proposal. Thorez, who had been out of town at the time of the Politburo statement, is reported to have reprimanded his colleagues for their hasty declaration. The official party newspaper L'Humanité began stressing the importance of de Gaulle's proposal.⁴⁴ As might be expected, by 1960, both the SFIO and the PCF were supporting de Gaulle's efforts to negotiate peace with the FLN.⁴⁵

Before concluding this discussion of Algeria, there is one special aspect of the problem which must not be overlooked. In spite of the massive support which was eventually accorded de Gaulle's plans for Algerian independence, a certain segment of French society persisted in demanding the retention of Algeria for France. One of the spokesmen for this group was Francois Mitterand, who even went so far as to condemn the NATO allies for not helping France in her

struggle against this armed, communist attack on an integral part of French territory. Many of the French military fighting in Algeria agreed with him when he spoke of the need to make the Allies understand that

[today] the Mediterranean, and not the Rhine, comprises the very axis of our security, and therefore of our foreign policy.⁴⁶

French military personnel who belonged to this school of thought tended to come from among the specially trained and indoctrinated colonial units of the French armed forces. It was on April 22, 1961, that a group of military men such as these attempted to save French Algeria by executing an eleventh-hour coup d'etat in Paris. The attempt failed, however, due to a lack of generalized support from the rest of the French military which was based mainly in France and Germany and thus not as ideologically motivated.

The coup attempt had a tremendous impact on the public. The immediate reaction of the PCF was to take advantage of the fascist threat: the French Communists clamored for the creation of popular militias.⁴⁷ The Socialists met on April 26th and unanimously approved the following statement:

The Steering Committee of the SFIO has examined the political situation in the aftermath of the failure of the subversive action taken by a group of officers betraying their duty.

The inflexible firmness of the President of the Republic throughout the entire crisis, and especially that which he showed in his address to the nation and in his instructions to the army, was a decisive element in the quick liquidation of the insurrection...

In spite of the reserve and rancor which they can legitimately feel towards a system that favors the well-to-do, the Workers...demonstrated that they are the Nation and that they will not tolerate the installation in France of fascist military authority...

The army must be reorganized, most especially the specialized units that made up the shock troops in the insurrection. The Republic, in order to be defended,⁴⁸ must be served by men who are incorruptably attached.

This was precisely what President de Gaulle had in mind.

2. Force de Frappe

As France's colonial empire came to an end with the granting of independence to the various possessions, so too did end the French military's idealistic, ideologically-motivated struggle against communism in the colonies. Important segments of the French armed forces were suddenly faced, once again, with lack of a mission. But more importantly, the government was faced with a body of armed men who had no clear purpose or reason for being. De Gaulle had taken this into consideration when he decided to reorganize the French armed forces in such a way that the center of attention would be the defense of la Patrie - the defense of France. In order to accomplish this fundamental reorientation of purpose, he injected into the system one vital new ingredient: French nuclear power.⁴⁹

France had been secretly developing her own nuclear capability since July 1952 by authorization of a governmental program. According to Alfred Grosser, every successive government reaffirmed the importance of the program and actively (albeit secretly) supported preparations for technically applying the new nuclear source of power.⁵⁰ President

de Gaulle and General Charles Ailleret transformed France's nuclear potential into a powerful, national Strike Force (Force de frappe) comprising nuclear-armed manned bomber aircraft, intermediate-range land-based ballistic missiles and nuclear-powered ballistic missile carrying submarines.

Leftist opposition to an indigenous, French nuclear force began as early as 1961. The SFIO had already announced its opposition to the idea by April of that year.⁵¹ By 1964 both the SFIO and the PCF were organizing demonstrations against the nuclear force. (The SFIO even formed a special National Committee against the Force de frappe.)⁵²

The Leftist argument became formalized during Mitterrand's 1965 presidential campaign. (As already mentioned, Mitterrand's candidacy was supported not only by the non-communist FGDS but also by the PCF.) Mitterrand's campaign proposals were published the next year as the Program of the FGDS,⁵³ and a section of the program was devoted to the disposition of the nation's armed forces and, most especially, its force de frappe:

To preserve its freedom its culture and its prosperity, a nation has the duty to defend itself against eventual foreign pressures or interventions...It is true...that the threat could be...military. Hence the necessity to organize for the defense of the nation...An armed nation requires universal and compulsory military service, the length of which will be reduced...The army can and must contribute to the civil and professional formation of young citizens...The army reserve will regain the place it never should have lost in the military organization: that of being region and mission specific.

Every government must maintain an active arsenal. If it is normal for the State to place orders...with certain private specialized industries like those dealing with electronics, it is nonetheless necessary [for

it] to NATIONALIZE those industries which produce the weapons necessary for the nation's defense.

The danger of today's policy is that France might find herself one day without any conventional forces while at the same time not disposing of a real force de frappe...France must put an end at the very soonest possibility to the vain attempt to create an autonomous nuclear capability...The undertaking is reprehensible: to pretend that France is capable of having all the elements of an autonomous thermo-nuclear military force, that is to say not only the bomb, but also the launch vehicles and the warning system to detect hostile attacks, is to feign ignorance of economic, financial and even geographic realities...

A government run by democratic socialists would therefore decide, the very next day after its assumption of power, to renounce the creation of a national atomic force...The cancellation of the force de frappe would entail a reconversion of some factories and jobs... Atomic research represents a great deal on an energy level [and on] the level of research for peaceful purposes...⁵⁴

Three years later, however, immediately following the 1969 election of Gaullist candidate Georges Pompidou to the presidency (for a term of seven years), Mitterrand wrote the following:

I said during my 1965 presidential campaign that I would outlaw the Force de Frappe. I would not be able to say that tomorrow. The military policy of General de Gaulle was approved of by the French people...Seven years from now our atomic arsenal will be an irreversible reality. You won't be able to drown it like you do puppies. Some suggest transferring it to a European level, when Europe exists. That would resolve a part of the immense problem. But that would also be hypothesizing Soviet consent to this indirect form of rearming Germany - and in what a way!⁵⁵

Was this an historic turning point; had the Socialists accepted a nuclear fait accompli?

3. United Europe

a. SFIO/PS

In 1958, Charles de Gaulle arrived on the political scene with a plan for Europe entirely different from that

supposed earlier by the Socialists. De Gaulle had a unique perception of the role France should play in Europe and the world.

All my life I have nurtured a precise image of France, inspired by both feeling and reason. What I have in me of sentiment naturally pictures France, like the fairy-tale princess of the madonna in the fresco paintings, as vowed to some superior, exceptional destiny...If on occasion her gestures and actions indicate mediocrity, I have the feeling of an absurd anomaly, stemming from the mistakes of the French and not from the genius of the nation...The positive side of my mind convinces me that France is only truly herself when she is among the first, that only great tasks are liable to compensate for the leaven of dispersion that her people secretes within itself...In one word, as I see it, France cannot be France without grandeur...⁵⁶

Therefore, France was to be more than a mere member of a United Europe; it was to be Europe's leader. Possessing an indigenously-produced nuclear defense system, France could call itself the most independent of all the European nations. De Gaulle wanted to safeguard the sovereign authority of the French nation against any attempt to submerge it into a nebulous, collective decision-making body. Towards this end, he opposed the creation of all supranational institutions; he instituted the principle of individual veto in the organs of the European Communities, assuring thereby that no nation's interests would be sacrificed to the dictates of majority rule.

De Gaulle's Europe of Nations was bitterly attacked by the French Socialist Party as the product of a chauvinistic love of the fatherland.⁵⁷ This does not mean, however, that the Socialists refused to support the various European institutions, such as they were. On the contrary, the French Socialist Party continued to participate in the building of

a United Europe and in the creation of as much de facto socialist internationalism as they could. In 1961 the 53rd SFIO Party Congress expressed its pleasure over the positive changes occurring in the British attitude toward the EEC⁵⁸ and in 1964, the SFIO tasked its parliamentary group to research the best way of maintaining French Socialist representation in the European Assembly.⁵⁹ In 1965 the Bulletin Interieur de Parti Socialiste SFIO bitterly condemned Gaullist behavior in the European community. The Bulletin referred specifically to the French government's 1 July 1965 statement that France would no longer participate in the meetings of the EEC due to a delay being caused by the other nations in reaching an agricultural agreement. The SFIO asserted that the French government had a number of other options, including presenting its case to the European Court of Justice. But the Socialists knew the Gaullists would never accord such importance to a European institution:

The Steering Committee denounces most vigorously the recent measures decided by the government of General de Gaulle. These will end in the reestablishment of State-to-State methods of diplomacy which have in the past cost Europe a series of bloody conflicts and destroyed the alliances that were permitting our country to recover its freedom.

M. Couve de Murville has declared that the Treaty of Rome accords only a strictly consultative role to the Strasbourg Assembly...Article 138 'of the Treaty of Rome' provides that there shall be elections for the Assembly on the basis of universal suffrage, which the Gaullist powers refuse to do and thus show how they ignore democracy as much outside as inside France.

By choosing Europe of Governments...instead of the union of European peoples, General de Gaulle encourages the renaissance...notably in Germany, of the worst kind of nationalism. This policy of false grandeur is contrary to the interests of France, Europe and peace.⁶⁰

The 1966 Program of the FGDS (comprising primarily Mitterrand's campaign proposals) promised the following actions, should the French Left be voted into power:

Election of a European Assembly by universal suffrage... expansion of the European Community by the addition of Great Britain...an opening of European institutions to countries of the East in an effort to promote peaceful coexistence...the progressive denuclearization of the center of Europe...the reunification of Germany...the nonmanufacture of nuclear weapons by Germany and the recognition of the Oder-Neisse line.⁶¹

b. PCF

As early as 1959, the PCF was condemning the European Common Market on the basis that it would increase the dependence on the part of the countries of Europe on the United States and the dependence of France on a revanchist and reactionary West Germany.⁶²

At the Party's 16th Congress in 1961, Waldeck Rochet (not yet Secretary General) referred to the EEC as a simple instrument "for the reinforcement of American monopolies in Europe."⁶³

By the spring of 1962, the Italian Communist Party (PCI) was revising its position on the EEC issue, saying it had "not properly understood" how to evaluate the effects of European integration on the Italian economy. It declared the EEC should not be dissolved, for it had considerable vitality and was based on the real needs of economic development.⁶⁴

At a conference in Moscow later that year, the PCF representatives were criticized by Soviet and Italian colleagues for their "subjective errors" in having ignored economic facts and seeing the EEC only as the work of U.S. and West German foreign policy.⁶⁵ The PCF was not to be swayed, however, for in February 1963 it refused to join the PCI in setting up a liaison office with the EEC in Brussels.

The first softening in the PCF position came in December 1964. After a meeting in Paris, the trade unions affiliated with the PCF and the PCI agreed to take the initiatives necessary to demand their admission to the organisms of the Common Market; and by May 1965, the Congress of the PCF-affiliated CGT labor union was calling for a single labor front for the six EEC nations.⁶⁶ Also in May, now Secretary-General Waldeck Rochet met with the leader of the PCI and subsequently announced that,

Without modifying our basic interpretations, we recognize that the Common Market exists...[and] we think that it is possible that a positive collaboration can be established ...which takes account of the interests of the workers in each country and also of our national interests.⁶⁷

Two months later, the Politburo of the PCF demanded Communist representation in Brussels and Strasbourg (the EEC and the European Parliament, respectively).⁶⁸ What could have sparked this dramatic reversal? Annie Kriegel offers the explanation that in 1965, the PCF was seeking an alliance with the Socialists and this recognition of the EEC was regarded by the French Communists as a concession. In reality, however, the PCF had determined that by recognizing the EEC, it could get inside the organization and eventually paralyze and annihilate it under the guise of "democratization."⁶⁹

There appears to be some proof to substantiate the suspicion that, despite its pronouncements to the contrary, the PCF persisted in its basic opposition to the EEC. During the PCF-PS negotiations for the 1972 Common Program, one of the areas of greatest disagreement was the economic

and political unification of the EEC. The PS insisted upon it; the PCF firmly rejected it.⁷⁰

4. Atlantic Alliance

The other point upon which the two parties could not be reconciled was the future of French membership in the Atlantic Alliance.⁷¹

a. PCF

The PCF had been among the first to protest against French military involvement in NATO. In 1957-1958, the entire PCF was mobilized to campaign against the United States' request to install missile launch sites in France.⁷² (An important point of contention was that the sites were to remain strictly under U.S. control.) But the French Communists' anti-NATO crusade came to an abrupt end when President de Gaulle made his historic March 11, 1966, speech demanding the withdrawal of all French troops from the integrated NATO command structure and the removal of all NATO bases and troops from French soil by April 1967.⁷³ This was an indisputably favorable move from a PCF or CPSU standpoint. Annie Kriegel has stated that nothing saved France from Communism better than the pro-Soviet policy practiced by General de Gaulle.⁷⁴ The old general had cunningly maneuvered the French Communists into a position of non-criticism, and therefore de facto support of his NATO/Force de frappe policies. The Gaullist defense policy did not come under direct Communist attack again until 1972.

On January 6, 1972, the new acting leader of the PCF, Georges Marchais, denounced the "accelerated sliding of the present [Pompidou] regime toward Atlanticism" and the "closer integration of French foreign policy with the general strategy of American imperialism."⁷⁵ One week later he claimed that the French government was relaxing its opposition to military integration within NATO. (An article concerning the current orientation of French foreign policy appeared in the Soviet newspaper Izvestia a few weeks later and it used terms similar to those employed by Marchais.)⁷⁶

b. SFIO

France's allies were dismayed and angered by de Gaulle's March 11th declaration. But then, so was the French Socialist party. The SFIO was enraged:

The Chief of State, in deciding the withdrawal of NATO, violates the word we gave to the allies, endangers our future and upsets our general policy without any prior debate in Parliament or even before the Council of Ministers.

His decision has the direct consequences of: forcing the withdrawal of American troops from France, which weakens the collective security that guarantees peace while we wait for disarmament; depriving our force de frappe, already costly and useless, of allied radar coverage so necessary to our aircraft; aiding the dissemination of nuclear weapons; and encouraging the re-armament of Germany which now becomes the principal ally of America, due to our own fault...

The Socialist Party...has always affirmed the necessity of reorganizing NATO, but it believes it essential that NATO armed forces be integrated to the maximum extent possible, not separated. Besides, it is mindless to pursue the destruction of NATO while at the same time impeding the construction of Europe.

The Socialist Party does not believe that it is possible to permanently base the organization of peace on

military alliances...there must be complete and general disarmament...⁷⁷

In the FDGS Program, published four months after this statement, the French Socialists had these plans for the disposition of France in the Atlantic Alliance:

Autonomous defense is not possible for a country like France, above all in the case of a nuclear conflict. Security does not exist for France except within the framework of an alliance that includes one of the great nuclear powers and within an organization of peaceful coexistence.

Our military instrument will henceforth be considered only within the context of what it is contributing to the alliance system to which France belongs...

In Europe, France intends to remain faithful to her friends and to the obligations she currently holds in the Atlantic Alliance. France does not believe that it is by destroying NATO from the inside that one can make a better system. That kind of action is a serious mistake, a fortuitous gesture which only changes the balance without bringing any compensating benefits.

The changes which have occurred since 1949 in the position of the Atlantic Alliance members demand a profound reorganization of the Pact. A French Leftist government would undertake negotiations with its ¹⁴ partners with the purpose of rebalancing the responsibilities of each...Even though France has left NATO, it is still able to explore ways to build an organization of peaceful coexistence that could be effective in determining the kind of military accords that should henceforth link the Atlantic allies.

The French Leftist government will orient all its efforts towards international detente and a plan for progressive and simultaneous general disarmament in order that the Atlantic Pact and the Warsaw Pact will eventually have no reason for being.⁷⁸

As explained earlier, the ideas of the Program were also those of Mitterrand. It might be interesting, therefore, to see if Mitterrand's NATO position became modified at all by the passage of time. In 1969, in his book entitled Ma Part de Vérité, Mitterrand wrote:

For every Socialist the building of peace is inseparable from the trilogy: international arbitration, simultaneous and controlled disarmament and collective security. But let's leave the Seventh Heaven of Great Principles right there. I will only say that I do not accept principles that have drawers, drawers that you open and close according to the opportunity of the moment...

I will not sacrifice to a union of the French Left the convictions that I have regarding the security of France and the balance of world power...

The Atlantic Alliance and the construction of Europe are not to be considered equals. I support the Atlantic Alliance; I wish for the new Europe. The problem of alliances is simple. What guarantee can Russia give us if we leave the Pact that binds us? And what will be the guarantee of that guarantee? At the point where we are today in international relations, no one is able to give me an answer. But as in all things, that which is not immediately possible becomes so if one is sufficiently determined. This is why I have taken a position in favor of the progressive and simultaneous dissolution of military blocs and the creation of a demilitarized zone in the center of Europe. I hope that France will take advantage of every opportunity to negotiate an inter-European collective security system...

This being said, I will now say that I am absolutely against any return of France to NATO. A lot of my close friends urge me to denounce the Alliance altogether. Their arguments have meaning for me when they speak of the Americans invading with their Secret Service, money and technology. But neutralism is not a policy for a country like ours. Therefore I am waiting for the chess players to make their move, and I meanwhile keep myself from upsetting their game.⁷⁹

5. World View

Apart from the long-term issues of United Europe and the Atlantic Alliance, there were a number of occasions during the 1960s when the French Socialist and Communist Parties had to formulate opinions of crisis situations.

With the sole exception of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, the PCF aligned itself closely with the Soviét foreign policy dictates throughout the 1960s. In 1960, the

PCF Central Committee proved its loyalty to "the position of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU)" by adopting a resolution which "disapproved the positions expressed by the comrades of the Chinese Communist Party."⁸⁰ In 1962, the PCF adopted the Soviet interpretation of the Sino-Indian conflict,⁸¹ and, a year later, Waldeck Rochet condemned the PRC for its "adventurist and nationalist policy," its aggravation and, a year later, Waldeck Rochet condemned the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) for its "adventurist and nationalist policy," its aggravation of international tensions and its promotion of the nuclear arms race by its hostility to the nuclear test ban treaty - a hostility described by Waldeck Rochet as being "shared with the imperialist 'madmen' and partners of the Cold War such as de Gaulle."⁸² During the Cuban Missile Crisis, L'Humanité saw only U.S culpability:

The pretexts invoked by Kennedy to hide his actions of piracy are pure lies. Everybody knows that the only military base in Cuba is an American base - Guantanamo.⁸³

Even after Khrushchev had officially recognized the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba, the PCF's loyalty was undiminished: they praised the Soviet leader's actions as having "saved the peace."⁸⁴ Similar praise was voiced the following year on the occasion of the Soviet signing of the 1963 nuclear test ban treaty in Moscow.⁸⁵

Thus, from the beginning of the Fifth French Republic, the official French Communist Party line was firmly pro-Soviet, but also anti-Gaullist. By 1964, however, de Gaulle was beginning a rapprochement with the Soviet Union, sending Giscard

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d'Estaing to Moscow and welcoming Podgorny to Paris. In March of that year, Thorez made an important announcement at a meeting of the Party's Central Committee: the PCF was to end its a priori opposition of all Gaullist foreign policy decisions. Thorez stated that the Party should not withhold its support from "positive" measures merely because "de Gaulle allegedly has ulterior motives."⁸⁷ (One such "positive" measure was the 1966 French recognition of the PRC; for, like the eviction of NATO forces, this was seen by the Kremlin as enhancing French isolation and independence from the Western bloc.)⁸⁸ Annie Kriegel has explained that, in the eyes of Communists, de Gaulle's was a "realistic" policy:

a policy which, although conducted by a "class adversary," is going "in the right direction."⁸⁹

But the primary determinants of PCF foreign policy remained to be the directives of the CPSU.

In 1964, the 17th PCF Party Congress issued a resolution, a section of which dealt with the orientation of foreign policy towards detente, peaceful coexistence and general, controlled disarmament. The terms and arguments used in that resolution were identical to those found in contemporary CPSU documents.⁹⁰ The pro-Soviet, pro-deGaulle foreign policy stance of the PCF greatly displeased the French Socialist party. For example, instead of parroting alien terms and arguments, the FGDS worked to develop promises specific to the French experience. In its 1966 program, the FGDS asserted that a French Leftist government would immediately reoccupy France's rightful place at the Geneva disarmament talks; it

would secure France's signature to the Moscow test ban treaty; it would initiate a general agreement on the non-proliferation and non-dissemination of nuclear weapons; and it would limit military expenditures to the 1965 level.

While the PCF was conducting its anti-Chinese campaign of the early 1960s, the SFIO Party Congress of 1961 was stating:

The Congress believes that it would be dangerous to keep China in its current state of isolation. The Congress hopes that the Peking Government will be recognized and that Chinese representation in the United Nations will be normalized.⁹¹

And in 1966, with regard to the tensions in the Middle East, the FGDS called for all nations, "using the eventual control of the UN, to end all interventions 'in the Middle East' that tend toward reinforcing the military potential of the various protagonists ...and to search for peaceful ways to settle the problems."⁹² The PCF preferred to side with the Soviets and voice support for the Arab cause.⁹³

C. COMMUNISM WITH A NATIONAL FACE

The PCF probably understood the reasons why Nasser was to be supported in the Middle East. But one wonders if the French Communists were ever told of the lightheartedness with which the Soviet leadership contemplated the fate of the non-ruling Communist parties in countries being governed by "positive" forces such as Nasser and de Gaulle. Brezhnev was quite specific on this subject in his private conversation with Ulbricht and Gomulka in 1967:

Nasser is muddle-headed in ideological matters. But he is a good man and has shown that he can be relied on. As politicians responsible for the future of humanity, we must naturally make sacrifices in order to achieve progress. One of the sacrifices we have had to accept is that Nasser persecutes the Egyptian Communists. But Nasser has the stature to assume the leadership of the Arab liberation movement which makes him invaluable to us at the present stage. This is a creative application of the Leninist principle of alliances with various different political groupings at any given point in time when this can serve the cause of revolution. Once the Arab masses realize what their true interests are we shall not need a Nasser any more.⁹⁴

Was the French Communist Party willing to support Soviet policies even to the point of its own self-destruction? I believe not.

In 1968, when the Soviet Union decided to launch a military invasion of Czechoslovakia, the PCF was still reeling from the disastrous effects of the May riots and the devastating defeat of the French Left at the polls. As explained earlier, the French Communists had been somewhat the victims of vicious anti-Left propaganda, in spite of their attempt to maintain a law-abiding, non-violent image throughout the crisis. What the PCF did not need, two months after the riots, was a blatant public display of armed Communist aggression anywhere in the world. Waldeck Rochet was Secretary General of the Party at this time and a delicate agreement had been reached, just a few months earlier, with the FGDS resulting in a Common Declaration, the fruit of many years' work and the promise for a future Leftist program of government. Waldeck Rochet knew all these painstaking negotiations would be for nought unless the Left could quickly recover its momentum. The Czech invasion, however, delivered the coup de

grace to whatever hopes remained for the creation of a United French Left by the end of the 1960s.

What was Waldeck Rochet's reaction to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia? Seeing his own Party's domestic situation in danger of being ruined by a Soviet display of armed aggression, Waldeck Rochet sharply condemned the invasion. The morning after the invasion, the PCF Politburo released a communique expressing "surprise and reprobation"⁹⁵ at the "military intervention in Czechoslovakia"⁹⁶ by the "Communist Party of the Soviet Union"⁹⁷ and its allies. Kevin Devlin describes the feeling that had prevailed prior to the crisis:

In Czechoslovakia...here, at last, was the promise of a socialist society to which Western Communists could point as a relevant example, without endlessly insisting that their own pluralistic, democratic paths would not be patterned after existing Communist regimes.⁹⁸

As early as April 1968, Waldeck Rochet expressed firm approval of the political and economic reforms being instituted by the Czech Communist Party leaders⁹⁹ and wished them "great successes in the application of their program aiming at the expansion of socialism."¹⁰⁰ On July 14th (three weeks after the PCF's defeat at the polls), Waldeck Rochet travelled to Moscow with two Italian Communists to defend the proper socialist nature of the Czechoslovak regime and to warn the Soviets "that for us only a political solution [is] admissible, and that any kind of armed intervention [would be] unacceptable."¹⁰¹ A few days later, the Central Committee of the PCF sent its Soviet counterpart a letter emphasizing the PCF's total opposition to military intervention and its inability to approve

such a measure. Once again it is Kevin Devlin who offers an insightful explanation of the PCF's repeated opposition to a military solution:

The West European parties...[took] their stand on the military intervention as a matter of principle...As Communists...they had to condemn the violation of norms accepted by the entire world movement - the sovereignty of each socialist state, the equality and autonomy of all parties, the right of each national Communist leadership to determine its own policies.¹⁰²

In October 1968, the new, more independent nature of the PCF became even more pronounced with the departure of one of the Politburo's most pro-Soviet and pro-Stalinist members:

Jeannette Vermeersch, widow of Maurice Thorez. After being censured by Waldeck Rochet and the Central Committee for her "divergent and contradictory position" on the Czechoslovakian invasion, Thorez's widow resigned from the Party.¹⁰³

These actions of 1968, however, must not be interpreted as symptoms of a PCF desire to wrench total independence from the Soviet Union. As explained in an earlier chapter, the French Communists seek only "respect for both the sovereignty of each country and the free determination of each party" as regards Party jurisdiction over purely national, domestic affairs, all the while preserving and respecting "the spirit of proletarian internationalism"¹⁰⁴ as the chief goal of all foreign policy decisions. Indicative of the French Communists' continued desire for good relations with the USSR is the fact that the PCF announced its acceptance of the "normalized" situation in Czechoslovakia five days after the invasion;¹⁰⁵ and, three months later, the PCF became the first non-ruling

Communist Party to send a delegation to Moscow to renew ties with the Soviets.¹⁰⁶ While it is true that on July 28, 1972, the PCF issued a statement in defense of some dissidents on trial in Czechoslovakia, Annie Kriegel minimizes the importance of this PCF stand. She points out that, unlike the strongly emotional Party condemnation of the invasion itself, this statement in 1972 contained no explicit criticism of the CPSU or any mention of the Soviet methods and directives that were certainly governing the conduct of the trials.¹⁰⁷

VIII. FROM ALLIANCE TO ANTITHESIS (1972-1977)

A. UNION

In the spring of 1972, at the time of the signing of the Common Program of the Left, there was no doubt that the French Communist Party was the dominant partner in the Union of the French Left. The Communists' position was somewhat attenuated by the surprising increase in public support for the PS during the March 1973 legislative elections, but the PCF still predominated, albeit by only two-and-a-half percentage points (PCF: 21.3%, PS: 18.9%).¹ Later that same year, the PCF watched with horror as the Leftist Allende regime in Chile was deposed and obliterated. The leadership of the PCF took this to be a lesson that, in order to successfully retain power in a politically pluralistic society, the Left must be supported by a substantial majority of the population.² When the French presidential elections were held six months later, in May 1974, Leftist candidate Francois Mitterrand obtained 43.4% of the first ballot vote, as compared with only 32.8% for the Centrist candidate Valery Giscard d'Estaing.³ After the final second-round ballots were cast, Mitterrand had lost to Giscard d'Estaing by less than one-and-one-half percentage points (a mere 350,000 votes).⁴ Seeing that the Left did not yet command a strong enough majority in French society, the Communist Party immediately embarked on a campaign to create a National Front.⁵ It appears they wanted

to repeat the historical example of the Front Populaire; for, just like Thorez in 1935, the PCF leadership in 1974 maneuvered into position to attract support from every corner of the French political spectrum calling Gaullists and "other patriots" to membership in the Union. As in 1935, members of the French Socialist party were not very keen on the idea, objecting that this new "Union of the People of France" would dilute the program and purpose of the smaller, but more purely Leftist confederation.⁶ Undaunted, the PCF proceeded to open its Party meetings to scrutiny by all, and Party leaders and members responded to questions from the public.⁷ All this came to an abrupt halt, however, just a few months later.

B. TENSION

1. Interparty

Parliamentary by-elections were held in September and October of 1974, and the PCF lost to the PS in five of the six races.⁸ For, while the Communists had been catering to the political Right, many former Communist supporters no longer considered the PCF a true anti-establishment party. As a result, they gave their vote to the French Socialist Party which had remained aloof from all the PCF shinanigans.⁹ Following the September-October humiliation, the PCF began a bitter anti-PS campaign. The Communists felt they had to reestablish their identity and, more importantly, their supremacy in the Union of the Left. Campaigning now strictly for itself, the PCF launched a membership drive, focusing on groups outside the working class such as intellectuals,

engineers, small businessmen and the military.¹⁰ An extraordinary Party Congress of the PCF was held in October and new conditions for membership were announced:

We must realize that after the presidential election hundreds of thousands of people want to participate in 'our' activity...Obviously they do not all have a clear vision of our strategy and of the final objectives of our party. But this cannot be an insurmountable obstacle to their membership. The desire to work for democratic changes... is sufficient.¹¹

The PCF ended its anti-PS campaign in the spring of 1975, as it became apparent that to continue any longer would threaten the very existence of the Union.¹²

2. International

In 1974, the French Communists received a political slap in the face. As in 1965, the PCF was determined to support Francois Mitterrand as candidate for the French presidency. The Soviets, however, were once again displeased with the narrowmindedness of the French Communists; to the eye of the CPSU, Valery Giscard d'Estaing appeared to be a sufficiently independent and chauvinistic statesman who would follow the general lines of Gaullist foreign policy. Therefore, in the midst of the presidential campaign, the Soviet Ambassador to Paris paid a well-publicized visit to Giscard.¹³

There are many possible reasons why the CPSU continually refuses to support the PCF's bids for power and leadership in France. Believing the position of the PCF to be too weak within the Union of the Left, the Soviets could be fearful of French Communists being forced into a secondary, subordinate role under the French Socialists, especially since

the prime minister in such a Leftist Union victory would be the leader of the Socialist Party. Without sufficient control over the government's actions, the PCF would become associated with all governmental decisions, whether Communist-endorsed or not. The pure and unique quality of Communism would be drowned in the sea of Social Democracy. Vadim Zagladin (CPSU First Deputy in charge of West European Communist Parties) expressed fear that certain Communist parties that had developed close associations with Social Democrats were in risk of losing their revolutionary nature.¹⁴ Boris Ponomarev (CPSU Secretary in charge of the International Department) warned, furthermore, that should the Union of the Left come to power in France and fail, the political climate would be ripe for a rightist, even fascist, takeover.¹⁵ In April 1975, shortly after cancelling Mitterrand's planned visit to Moscow, Brezhnev made a speech in Warsaw warning that, during such a time of capitalist economic crisis, Communist parties should refrain from making any tactical alliances with non-Communist parties; Communists were to remain politically independent.¹⁶

From October 1974 to October 1975, French Communists loyally supported Soviet-inspired proposals for the draft document of an upcoming pan-European Communist Party Conference, a pet project of the CPSU.¹⁷ French support was constant in spite of Italian, Spanish, Yugoslav and Romanian opposition to the Soviet line. The USSR answered this fidelity, however, by publishing an article in Pravda scorning the PCF's hardline approach to detente (a position Brezhnev himself

supported just a few days later). The reason for this insult? Giscard d'Estaing was visiting Moscow for the purpose of signing some new Franco-Soviet agreements.¹⁸

It appears that the PCF finally wearied of being the constant recipient of fraternal criticism and the victim of selfish Soviet maneuverings, for the French Communist Party leadership began to rebel. In August 1975, in answer to continuing criticism from Moscow, Georges Marchais publicly proclaimed that PCF policy was being made in Paris, not Moscow.¹⁹ In November, at the preparatory meeting for the pan-European Communist Conference, the PCF suddenly joined sides with the troublesome Italian and Spanish Communist Parties. This sudden defection to the ranks of the opposition succeeded in forcing a delay of the conference, much to the chagrin of the CPSU.²⁰ And so the polemic continued into 1976 and 1977.

One must be careful, however, not to overestimate the significance of these periodic barbs in PCF/CPSU relations. In her latest book, Un Autre Communisme?, Annie Kriegel explains that the current Franco-Soviet Communist antagonism should be interpreted as a tension in the bilateral relations of two Communist parties.²¹ (In other words, it is not to be interpreted as Leader-Subordinate dissension.) Kriegel goes on to say that the PCF is seeking neither to withdraw itself from the international Communist movement nor to dispute Soviet leadership of the movement. What the PCF wants to revise is "the number of obligations which...a Communist

party incurs by belonging to the world Communist movement."²² The French Party seeks to establish a certain distance between its proposed French road to socialism and the often embarrassing example of socialism as it is practices inside the Soviet Union.²³ In short, the PCF seeks sovereignty in all matters that concern the French national interest.²⁴ The hypothesis that this PCF movement towards greater freedom of action does not entail a divorce from Soviet leadership in the attainment of international goals finds a certain degree of confirmation in various statements made by Georges Marchais:

Socialist countries are implementing a foreign policy of peace and international cooperation which accords so well with...the peace program proposed to the world by the 24th CPSU Congress. [20th PCF Party Congress, 13 December 1972]²⁵

The existence of differences with the CPSU...does not lead, any more than it has in the past, to a lessening of our desire to cooperate with it in the common struggle against imperialism and for our great common goals. [22nd PCF Party Congress, February 1976]²⁶

I believe it would be dangerous to place the struggle for freedom opposite the struggle for detente and peaceful coexistence...The two must be fought simultaneously. I must say that, insofar as a matter involves peaceful coexistence and international detente, we have no criticism to make of the policy of the Soviet Union. [22 February 1977]²⁷

C. ESTRANGEMENT

In August 1976, as the PS and PCF began preparing for the March 1977 municipal elections, PS Secretary Mitterrand sent a telegram to all PS-affiliated trade unions enjoining them to refrain from making any concessions to the PCF during the upcoming interparty negotiations.²⁸ By September, Mitterrand's position and that of the PS majority had become so strong

that he was able to order the exclusion of the PS-left wing faction (C.E.R.E.S.) from membership in the PS Secretariat²⁹ and to declare, with regard to the PCF, "Yes to union, No to unanimity."³⁰ An opinion poll conducted in December 1976 by one of the major French polling agencies, IFOP, revealed that if parliamentary elections were held immediately: the Union of the Left would garner 53% to 56% of the popular vote (or 53% to 63% of the seats in the National Assembly).³¹ Of greater significance, however, is the partisan breakdown of the vote in which one can see a dramatic increase in public support for the non-Communist Leftist parties: the PS and the Radical Left Movement (MRG) together would win 31% to 33% of the vote (or 35% to 45% of the seats), whereas the PCF would receive no more than 19% of the vote (or 17% of the seats).³² These statistics were not lost on the PCF leadership.

By the end of 1976, Marchais was visibly losing patience with the evolution of the political situation. In response to a PS pro-Europe vote in the National Assembly in December, Marchais reportedly growled, "The wheels are beginning to grind."³³ But the Union was not to be broken before the March 1977 municipal elections. With both the PS and the PCF adhering faithfully to the electoral tactic described earlier, the French Left obtained the support of approximately two-thirds of all French cities having more than 30,000 inhabitants.³⁴

The CPSU Central Committee acknowledged this victory with a message to the PCF:

[The Central Committee of the CPSU] warmly congratulates the Communists and all the forces of the French Left on the occasion of the great success won during the municipal elections...Soviet Communists wish you and all the forces of the French Left continued progress in your noble struggle for the interests of the workers of your country, for peace, democracy and social progress.³⁵

The editors of L'Humanité published the message, but accorded it no special attention. For, in the midst of its campaign to portray itself as a national party, the PCF did not want to become linked to the Soviet Union. (It is just possible that this was precisely the intention of the CPSU: to plant a seed of doubt in the French public's mind regarding the true allegiance of the PCF. But if it was a tactic to prevent the PCF from taking office in a social democratic government, it failed; for, the PCF refused to give it the proper public exposure.) The victory had not been especially sweet for the French Communists. Once again, the public had shown its distinct preference for the non-Communist Left. In 1971, the PCF had controlled 51 of the cities with populations greater than 30,000, and the PS controlled only 45. After the March 1977 elections, however, the PS's support in this category had increased 82% compared with a meager 39% for the PCF.³⁶ Refusing to remain in this position, always two steps behind the Socialist Party, the PCF began making a series of dramatic announcements in an apparent attempt to reorient votes toward the Communist side of the Leftist Union.³⁷ Two of the most controversial announcements occurred during the second week in May. The first was a sensational article in L'Humanité announcing the estimated costs of the Common

Program's nationalization plans. (This article was probably aimed at embarrassing the Socialist Party, for it came less than 48 hours before Mitterrand was due to meet Prime Minister Barre in a televised debate on the French economy.)³⁸ The second came just 24 hours after the first: a shocking declaration that the PCF intended to keep the French force de frappe as the mainstay of an independent, national defense force oriented in all directions. (The significance of this action will be discussed in detail in Chapter IX.)

Undaunted, the Socialist Party continued to consolidate its political position. In early 1977, the PS sent envoy Jean-Pierre Cot to Washington, D.C., to make contact with U.S. State Department officials. He returned to Paris with Cyrus Vance's assurance that the accession of the Union of the Left to power in France would not create a "major problem" for the Carter government.³⁹ Then, in June 1977, Mitterrand welcomed two official CPSU Central Committee observers to the PS Party Congress at Nantes; the three men reportedly had a chance to confer privately for about thirty minutes.⁴⁰ On the 26th of September, a PS delegation travelled to West Germany to confer with Social Democratic Party (SDP) representatives in Bonn; the purpose of their meeting was to prepare the Mitterrand-Schmidt talks which were held on the 29th of September in the German capital.⁴¹

The French Socialist Party's euphoria was in some respects a facade, for the Union of the Left was slowly crumbling. Since May 1977, the three parties of the Union had been meeting intermittently to revise and update the Common Program.

From the outset, however, a distinct feeling of tension and mistrust prevailed. Georges Marchais denounced "the personal power" of Francois Mitterrand. ⁴² Members of the PS leadership complained, "We know nothing, absolutely nothing about what's really going on inside the PCF...Something has certainly happened, but what?"⁴³

It is possible, however, that the PCF finally decided that all further efforts to weaken the position of the Socialists before the elections in March 1978 would be in vain - all efforts, that is, except one: to dissolve the Union of the Left. From the standpoint of the French Communists, the Union had been their brain child. It had been created during a period when the PCF was the strongest single Leftist party in France. At that time, de Gaulle had gone, the temporary electoral alliances with the non-Communist Left during the 1960s had proven profitable, and there was every reason to hope that a Communist-led Union of the Left might be popularly elected in the very near future to a majority position in the French government. But in creating the Leftist Union, the PCF had unwittingly provided the French public with an alternate, less drastic way of expressing its anti-establishment feelings: to vote for the Socialist Party. Once the two parties had publically agreed to always combine their power, a vote for the small, minority Socialist Party was no longer wasted. By 1977, the Socialist Party was no longer the junior partner in the arrangement. The PCF had tried to reverse the strong pro-PS current of popular opinion by offering repeated evidence of the enlightened and patriotic

ideals allegedly locked in the hearts of PCF leaders. But the PS success of five years could not be undone in just a few months; on September 22, 1977, the Union of the French Left broke apart.

On that day, the small leftwing MRG seceded from the Union, blaming Communist intransigence for the failure of the three parties to reach an agreement on a common interpretation of the 1972 program.⁴⁴ During the night 22-23 September, Mitterrand is reported as having declared, "If everyone will be ready to make an agreement, then let's meet tomorrow morning. If not, then why waste our time...?"⁴⁵ The morning meeting was not held and the problem of the program's revision remains unresolved. There have been sporadic PS attempts to reunite the three parties, but following an attempt on November 9th, the pro-Socialist Party newspaper Le Martin de Paris stated that

The brief meeting [between the leading negotiators of the three parties]...has swept away the last hopes of a reopening of negotiations in the near future.⁴⁶

The Italian Communist Party leadership believes the PCF is deliberately trying to undermine the chances of a Leftist election victory in March 1978, and that it is purposely "removing itself from all possibility of entering a French government after the next elections."⁴⁷ In November, PCI party representatives went to Paris to find out what had really happened. Reportedly, they were told only that Mitterrand had politically turned to the right. The prestigious French daily Le Monde reports that the PCI are believed to be furious with the PCF for causing the split;

for the Italian Communists had counted on a leftist victory in France in 1978 to facilitate the credibility of their own coming to power before 1979. The PCI had also reportedly thought a victorious French Left would lend added support to the PCI's anti-Soviet stance.⁴⁸

Almost prophetically, Annie Kriegel wrote in 1974 that:

In the event an alliance with the Socialists should lead to...a type of Front Populaire, [the Communists] would work to enclose their allies, in advance, in a network of well chosen obligations which would ensure, all by themselves, the kind of system and society that will be built by the allies together, like it or not...[They want to be] concretely guaranteed against any treacherous dreams that the other allies might feed each other once the charm of unity has worn off.⁴⁹

French public opinion polls taken before September 22nd gave the Leftist Union 53 to 54% of the vote; a survey taken soon after the split found only 52% would vote for the Left. And by October 10th, less than a month later, only 50% favored the Left.⁵⁰ Will the French public continue to regard the three Leftist parties as an ad hoc Union for election purposes? Will the three parties still be able to command an electoral majority after an additional four months of discord? Will Francois Mitterrand be able to finally take a place of leadership in the Fifth French Republic in spite of the Union rifts? In answer to this last question, Mitterrand replies simply:

Right now I am working on a long-term basis. The victory of the Union of the Left has perhaps been retarded, but it is historically inevitable. At least I have built an adult, solid Socialist Party, the largest political party in France.⁵¹

IX. THE QUESTION OF DEFENSE

Now that the union of the Left has broken apart, it appears doubtful that the PS and the PCF will be able, or even willing to reach any general agreement on defense policy before the elections of March 1978. The possibility of one or both parties participating in the next government of France cannot be included. But, in any event, the defense strategies and interests of the French Left occupy a significant place in the current school of French strategic and military thought. What is the defense orientation of the current government? How realistic are the proposals being made by the PS and PCF? These are the questions to be addressed in this chapter.

Two years before the advent of the Giscard government, the French Left laid down its defense plans in six chapters of a Common Program. Since then, there has been major changes made in the official defense policy of France. A study of the proposals made by the Left in 1972 provides an interesting basis for comparison as one studies the evolution and the present orientation of French Socialist and Communist strategic thought.

A. YESTERDAY: THE POLICY OF THE LEFT

As mentioned above, The Common Program of 1972 includes six chapters dealing with international and national defense issues. The most important statements regarding defense and Franco-American relations will be enumerated here.

1. Force de frappe

The principal objective of the new Leftist government would be general, universal and controlled disarmament. The national defense policy would be founded on the following principles:

- a. Renunciation of the strategic force de frappe in any form whatever; immediate halt to the construction of the French force de frappe; reconversion...of the military nuclear industry into a peaceful atomic industry taking care to safeguard the interests of the workers involved. In no case will the problems caused by this reconversion serve as pretext for the maintenance of the military nuclear industry.
- b. Immediate halt to nuclear testing and adherence to treaties banning nuclear explosions and limiting the dissemination of nuclear weapons.
- c. Become a signatory to international treaties limiting and banning specific kinds of weapons. Initiate the extension of these treaties. Participate actively in the Geneva Conference and in all other disarmament conferences.
- d. Propose a world negotiation on universal nuclear disarmament, on simultaneous and controlled reduction of weapons, armed forces and military budgets.
- e. Halt to all sales of arms and war materials to colonial, racist or fascist governments (South Africa, Portugal, Spain, Greece).
- f. Strict regulation of sales of arms abroad.¹

2. NATO and European Security

Taking into account the actual state of European affairs, the Leftist government would seek to assure the security of France by basing its national defense policy on a simultaneous search for collective security and disarmament, respect for its alliances and reorganization of the French armed forces.²

- a. While continuing to refuse to re-integrate into NATO, France will not forbid itself from concluding, if necessary, defensive alliances and non-aggression treaties. If a system of European collective security were to require them, French armed forces could participate...
- b. The government will define a military strategy that will be applicable to any eventual aggressor, whoever it might be.
- c. The government will pronounce itself in favor of the simultaneous dissolution of the North Atlantic Treaty and the Warsaw Treaty. It will be in favor of all measures that will lead to the progressive weakening of existing politico-military alliances to the point where they completely disappear.
- d. The government will multiply all possible initiatives for the effective and controlled reduction of weapons and their manufacture, taking into account the necessity of preserving, at every step, the security of the country.
- e. The government will actively participate in the preparations for the Conference of States for European Security and Cooperation. The government will propose that the Conference reach a general accord on measures for European disarmament. It will take all the necessary initiatives to create a European treaty establishing a new security organization for all States participating in the Conference.
- f. The government will favor the creation of nuclear-free zones, a freeze on armaments in central Europe, the controlled and balanced reduction of forces and arms in Europe, and the creation of a true European collective security system.
- g. The government wishes to practice in all situations a policy independent of all military blocs, but the government will respect the current alliance arrangements of France...It will demand an immediate end to NATO assistance to the dictatorships of Spain, Greece and Portugal...The military accord with Franco will end.³

3. French Armed Forces

The army is the instrument of the nation's defense.⁴

As such:

- a. The army will be exempt from all missions involving the internal maintenance of order...it will not be used for any external interventions of a colonial or imperialistic nature.
- b. All orientation of the army towards a career force will be abandoned. Conditions to assure the professional cadre their material and moral dignity will be created. The army will be organized on the basis of regional reserves.
- c. Military service will be equal for all and last six months. The recruitment, training and promotion of reserve and active duty officers and NCOs will exclude all selection based on social, political or philosophical discrimination.
- d. The government will rely on the unfailing loyalty of its officers and NCOs.
- e. Conscientious objectors will be neither rewarded nor punished. They will accomplish their legal duty by performing services in the general interest. They will be exempted from military training and from duty in combat units.⁵

B. TODAY: THE POLICY OF GISCARD

The French defense scene has undergone some major revisions under the guidance of the 1974-elected President of the Republic, Valery Giscard d'Estaing. It is important to study the foreign and defense policy orientations of the President, for, by virtue of the Constitution of the Fifth Republic, Giscard should remain in office until 1981, regardless of which political party is voted into power in the National Assembly. The compatibility or incompatibility of Giscard's policies with those of the Left, or even one part of the Left, could be crucial in the successful avoidance of a constitutional crisis (i.e. the necessity of the President to resign before the end of his term). Georges Marchais has attempted to dispell fears in this regard by stating, "following the elections, there

would be better things to do than to involve the country in a dispute over a change of constitution which would take us from the Fifth to a Sixth Republic."⁶

1. Giscard's Foreign Policy

Economist by education and French Minister of Finance for 12 years, Valery Giscard d'Estaing has replaced the idealism of the Gaullist era with a keen, calculating eye trained on the realistic place of France in today's world. He recognizes that "France used to be a superpower,...but our size, population and natural resources prevent us from being so today."⁷ "There are superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union...then there is the special case of China...then there is the group of Japan, Germany, Great Britain and France. Our ambition...should be that France be at the head of this group [of medium-sized powers]."⁸ Giscard's government has consequently acquired a strong "European" flavor as the French Chief of State strives for an increased, closer, pragmatic interface between the nations of Europe. In short, he seeks to increase the viability and real power of the European collectivity to which France belongs. Recognized "European-oriented" officials have been selected by Giscard to occupy important positions in his government.⁹

Giscard d'Estaing is an advocate of détente - "the gradual establishment of more trusting relations between all the countries of the world."¹⁰ In particular he is trying to focus world attention on "North-South" relations and increase developed nations' awareness of the economic and political importance of the developing world. The word economic

is of key importance: a central concern of the President throughout his administration has been the strengthening of his nation's sagging economy. As J.O. Goldsborough said, "diplomacy...reflects the needs of industry"¹¹ and nothing could be more true with regard to the Giscard government. The Mediterranean as a lifeline to the oil-producing Middle East and Europe as a market for arms sales has been the spoiled child of France's attentions. Mitigating this basic pragmatism, Giscard often evokes the theme of a United Europe: a powerful confederation of sovereign states working for the benefit of all, but robbing none of its individual members of prestige or power.

Here is Europe, that will one day be united, and where France must not be dominated. And here is France, which has come so far, France of the battlefields, of the successive revolutions, France with the cries in the street and France with the quiet country mornings, France which can be one of the first to cross the thresh-old of a new organization of society.¹²

2. French Defense Policy: The Gaullist Legacy

The question arises: how to reconcile this foreign policy with the all or nothing, nuclear deterrent defense policy inherited from the Gaullist era? General Pierre Gallois (retired) was one of the chief supporters of de Gaulle's creation of a force de frappe (the nuclear "strike force"). Today he is a spokesman for those elements in France which continue to maintain that the country must refrain from embroiling itself in any collective security arrangements and rely solely on its supreme deterrent: the French second-strike nuclear capability.¹³ According to Gallois, there are only a few vital areas in France that need to be protected by

the armed forces (e.g. the strategic missile silos on the Plateau d'Albion) and there is correspondingly no need for large numbers of conventional troops or weapons to be deployed to the borders. A line of resistance could be constructed along the country's frontiers. Crossing it would signal an enemy's decision to invade France and cause French nuclear weapons to be launched quasi-automatically. In Gallois' view, the introduction of tactical nuclear weapons, such as the short-range Pluton missile, has only served to dilute the credibility of French determination to use her strategic nuclear forces. In today's world, a country with France's geographic location and limited manpower resources cannot afford to play tactical games with any encroaching enemy. Thus, Gallois continues to agree with de Gaulle's words:

[The] basic role of the air and land forces does not consist of joining a battle that they have no chance of winning in view of the balance of forces, but of obliging the adversary to face the risks of our strategic nuclear response...Deterrence [is] the only effective way of ensuring our territorial integrity and our political independence.¹⁴

In its purest, most extreme form, this school of strategy holds that to enhance her independence, and thereby the credibility of her deterrent, France must impartially aim her nuclear forces "à tous azimuts - in all directions," to use the words of General Ailleret, former Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. In this way France would be neither ally nor enemy of any nation. In this conception, when a nation participates in NATO, it becomes an enemy of the Soviet Union. This makes it a player in the highly risky game of Western

Defense in which the allies hope the aggressor will follow a particular pattern of action for which NATO forces are trained and prepared. Gallois maintains that if France commits itself to the defense of areas outside her territorial borders (e.g. West Germany) and then suffers tactical defeats on those battlefields, the French government would be faced with "a dilemma involving a choice between humiliation - acceptance of the terrible fait accompli - or of escalation...the supreme risk for a stake which would not be directly related to her own interests."¹⁵

3. French Defense Policy: The Present

This Gaullist conception has been increasingly challenged in Giscard's France. For example, Jacques Vernant, Secretary General of the Center for the study of Foreign Affairs, has written of "the need to put our defense policy in harmony with our diplomatic policy." He concludes that, "since our diplomatic policy is to assemble Western Europe into one cohesive body, it would appear reasonable to give a European role to Defense so that our partners would be reassured about our motives."¹⁶ In his 1974 book, La France Désarmée, former Chief of Staff of the French Air Force, General Paul Stehlin, noted after participating in a Parliamentary tour of the French Strategic Nuclear Forces, that

It could not escape the attention of any visiting parliamentarian that the 'plausible' enemy...was...very well defined geographically: the Soviet Union...There is a dramatic contradiction between our diplomacy and our defense...We have been estranged from our necessary allies and natural friends...In the international circumstances of today, France can only be defended collectively...Neither our nuclear forces nor our conventional forces can alone assure the security of France.¹⁷

General Stehlin pointed out that the very existence of the French nuclear force only makes sense when it is considered within the context of a collective European defense scheme. A strong argument supporting this theory has been formulated by Raymond Aron:

The French nuclear force is not one that can discriminate between towns and pinpoint targets; therefore, by using her nuclear force, she would destroy Soviet cities and thereby incur her own self-destruction...she will be therefore most reluctant to use this force. The U.S. nuclear force is so refined that it would be capable of striking targets without destroying cities, and thus would not provoke her own self-destruction as we would...The whole question of dissuasion is not how sure the USSR is of U.S. intervention, rather how uncertain she may feel... if she knows that France is reluctant to use her nuclear force, so much for our policy of dissuasion.¹⁸

President Giscard d'Estaing, apparently sharing the views of these "Atlantistes," ordered an in-depth review of France's defense policy in July 1975. Under de Gaulle and Pompidou, France had let it be known that any threat to her homeland would be met with nuclear retaliation, because this was the only major force she had, and therefore, the only one she could use. This all or nothing stand, however, robbed the policy of dissuasion of its very foundation: uncertainty and unpredictability of French response. The enemy could feel quite confident that, unless it were so careless as to directly violate the French borders, it had a wide freedom for action; the French Strategic Nuclear Forces would lie quiet. Giscard wanted to restore the element of doubt to France's defense position, to expand the credible options for French response to aggression, so the enemy could no longer be sure exactly when France might opt to use her

nuclear forces. (This doubt, of course, also serves to decrease France's feeling of security since it increases the likelihood of a pre-emptive enemy attack.) Although Giscard wants to increase his options by having a full complement of conventional, tactical and strategic nuclear weapons, this does not indicate a policy of "gradual escalation."¹⁹ General M^{er}y, Chief of Staff of the French Armed Forces, recently stated that "military effectiveness is second to the manifestation of our political will to warn the enemy that the use of tactical nuclear weapons indicates that the battle has changed and that the next stage may be the use of strategic fire." The General refuses to contemplate protracted war involving nuclear weapons; France will not fight such a war, and for that reason it will have no "mininukes": small, limited destruction, precision-guided tactical weapons.

General M^{er}y disapproves of the manufacture of any weapons with a yield of less than a kiloton.²⁰

Concurrent with this maintenance of a sufficiently destructive nuclear force, Prime Minister Barre declared the necessity of keeping to a "counter-city strategy...for it is the only really deterrent solution, given the modest size of our nuclear force."²¹ He also introduced the interesting notion that the French nuclear forces might possibly be used from foreign territories:

All our forces, strategic nuclear forces, tactical nuclear forces and conventional forces participate equally in deterrence and must always be prepared so as to prevent war from breaking out. This concept of deterrence applies to the defense of our vital interests, that is, essentially to our national territory...and also to its approaches, that is, neighboring and allied territories.²²

The French President noted that too many resources had been expended on building up the strategic nuclear forces, while all the other elements of French defense had lain idle, neglected, and had been allowed to deteriorate. He asserted that the conventional forces must be rebuilt and reincorporated into French defense options. Giscard sees the principal enemy as clearly lying to "the East" and this must be the main orientation of French strategic defense policy.²³ But would this be enough? For, as Raymond Aron has pointed out, it is hard to believe that Soviet forces would stop at the French border once the USSR had committed itself to the immense risk of a massive attack on the Central Front.²⁴ The current defense policy officially states, "It would be illusory to hope that France could retain anything more than diminished sovereignty if its neighbors were occupied by a hostile power or even came under its control. The security of the whole of Western Europe is, therefore, essential for France."²⁵ Giscard has been significantly more explicit:

Certain people reason as if the conflict, taking place outside the national territory of France, would let us remain totally uninvolved. This viewpoint is not realistic. Due to the rapidity of the means of transportation and communication, there will be only one territory, and French territory will be from the beginning included in that territory of generalized war. This does not mean that the enemy will actually set foot on French land, because dissuasion is there for that...Since there will be only one territory, it is essential that there be only one military body on that territory.²⁶

As optimistic as this might sound for the cause of European military integration, such is not to be the case. Giscard's armed forces remain very definitely "national" forces. Jacques Vernant writes that "It is no longer a question of French

reintegration with NATO, because this is politically impossible; rather, it is a question of knowing if the consequences of the 1966 decision can be annulled in practice..." [emphasis added].²⁷ Independence for the French is not to be sacrificed for any cause. De Gaulle felt that by integrating French forces into NATO, France became like a dependent child, dependent on the U.S. He argued that once submerged in a collective defense arrangement, a nation soon loses its self-confidence and its sense of responsibility for its own national defense.²⁸ One finds much the same feeling in the writings of the current President: "Must the domination of the superpowers be accepted as a fatalistic fact of history? Our own history teaches us how much strength and reserved force can come from one's desire to be one's self."²⁹ Thus it becomes evident that, by selfishly guarding her independence, France is expressing a fundamental desire for internal strength and integrity rather than a basic hostility towards the rest of the world; and the idea of joining a collective European defense effort becomes consistent with French thinking, so long as her right to independent decision is assured. Regarding the role of the U.S. military in Europe, Giscard d'Estaing considers the presence of American forces in Europe to be a proof of the United States' commitment to the defense of that Continent; he is opposed to any efforts to diminish that presence - hence one of the reasons for French refusal to participate in the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks.³⁰

4. French Defense Policy: The Decisionmakers

Before addressing the current defense policy of France in detail, it might be helpful at this point to briefly describe the organization of the French defense structure and identify the key participants in the making of policy.³¹ The President of the Republic is Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and is invested with the supreme power to declare war and to determine the use of the French tactical and strategic nuclear forces. The Defense Committee, assembled and presided over by the President of the Republic, makes all major decisions pertaining to national defense matters. This Committee comprises the President, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defense, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Interior. (It is to be remembered here that, in practice, all these officials are individually accountable to the President and subject to dismissal by him.) The Prime Minister assures the execution of the Committee's decisions. The Minister of the Interior is responsible for executing all policies concerning the defense of the civilian population of France. (So far there have been no provisions made to protect the public against the effects of a nuclear attack - there is no civil defense program. There are only two anti-nuclear shelters in existence in France: those which will protect the governmental and military high-command officials located at the underground command centers of Taverny and Mount Verdun.)³² The Minister of Defense is in charge of preparing and eventually executing all strategic plans. (See Figure 1.)

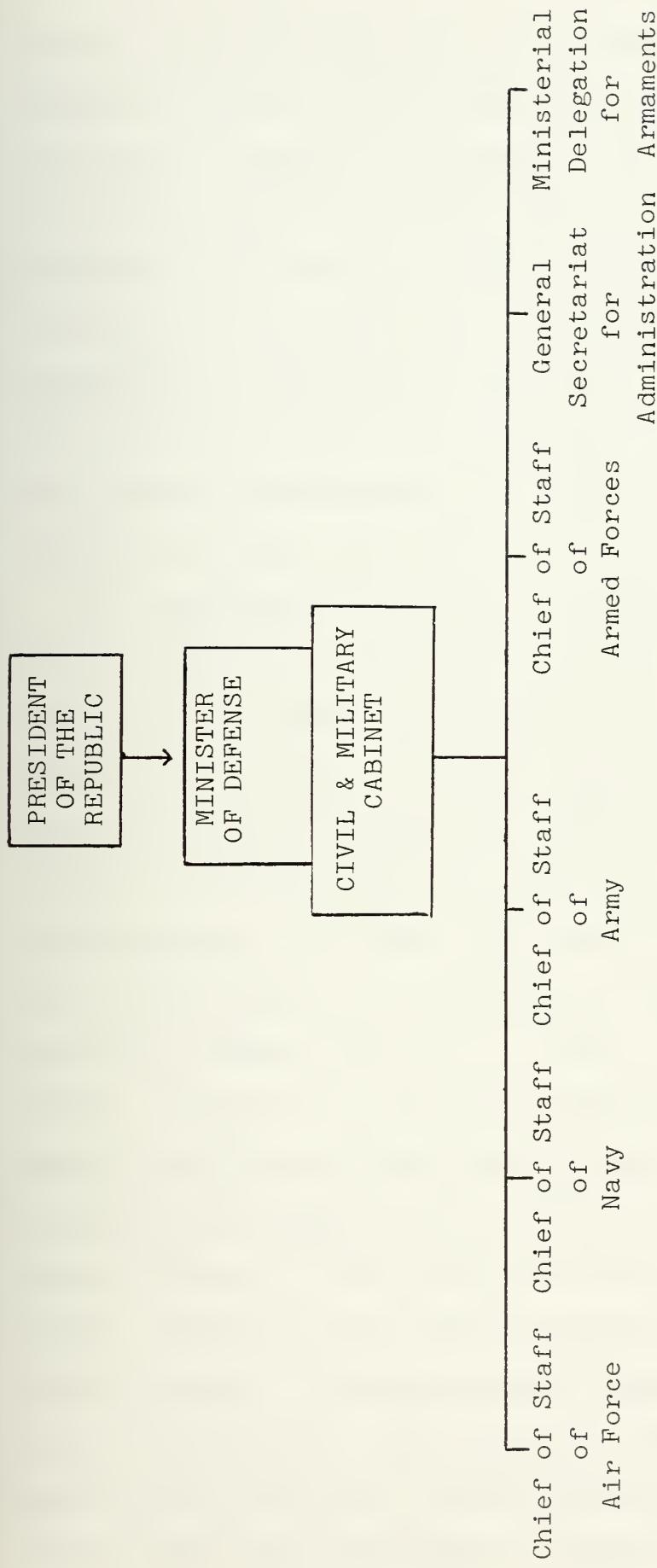


Figure 1.

(Adapted from "L'administration centrale du ministère de la défense" by J-C. Roqueplo, Defense Nationale, April 1977, pp. 12 & 13.)

Subordinate to the Minister is the Ministerial Delegate for Armaments and the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. The Ministerial Delegate for Armaments is in charge of all activities concerning the study, research and development of armaments. The Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces draws up the plans for utilizing the armed forces. He is also responsible for all military operations in wartime (except for those involving tactical or strategic nuclear weapons).³³ And, finally, subordinate to the Minister, are the Chiefs of Staff of the three individual services.³⁴

5. Disposition of the Armed Forces

Passed by a vote in Parliament of 303 to 101, "The Program for Military Expenditures and Equipment for the Armed Forces for the 1977-82 Period" became law on 19 June 1976. With this act, the Giscard government began a fundamental reorganization of the French armed forces. Assessing the nuclear program to be essentially complete, Giscard has placed the restructuring, reequipping and reorganization of the conventional defense forces at the top of his list of national defense priorities. The conventional forces are being developed as an integral link in the defense scheme and are to be considered as complementary to the tactical and strategic nuclear forces.³⁵ Left idle for so many years, the conventional forces were not deemed capable, organizationally or operationally, of effectively performing in a modern military threat environment. With one eye on Europe and the other on North-South relations, the new defense policy law states that "France must have the means to confront the widespread

insecurity of a much more complex world which is far from having found its equilibrium, a world where direct or indirect threats can appear at any moment on unexpected horizons."³⁶ Therefore, Giscard argues, the armed forces must be highly mobile, organized and adaptable to the realities of the 1970's and 80's. The Army has been fundamentally restructured; the Navy is taking a new look at the Mediterranean; and the Air Force's Strategic Nuclear Forces have been reorganized. The policy of universal conscription has been maintained in spite of cries for an all-volunteer army.

Giscard told a French television audience that "the security of a nation must involve its entire population...the only people who guarantee their security are the ones who are determined to provide their own defense." (He also invoked the argument that a French all-volunteer army would have to be small, for economic reasons, and this would leave only one large, effective army in Europe: West Germany's. He believes it is important for the military balance of Europe for the French force to be comparable to that of Germany.)³⁷

While current priority is being given to funding conventional weaponry, research continues on "new generation" weapons, such as developing new missiles with increased speed, multiple warhead and countermeasures capabilities.³⁸ In fact, French Chief of Staff M  ry revealed in March of this year that under its second nuclear arms program, "Coelacanthe Two", France will develop military observation and guidance satellites, as well as a nuclear-tipped cruise missile.³⁹ General M  ry hinted that France is already advanced in its

cruise missile research.⁴⁰ The decision to opt for the development of military observation and guidance satellites instead of navigation and telecommunications satellites was due to the fact that, as Jacques Isnard put it, "the possession of such a spy satellite is indispensable, especially if France wants to be able to participate in international disarmament negotiations without having to depend on information which its allies might or might not provide it with."⁴¹ Such a satellite may also be needed to produce more precise geodetic and terrain elevation data for cruise missile guidance.⁴²

The passage of the Military Program Law assures that by 1982 the defense budget will constitute 20% of the state budget. In 1977, the defense budget was the only one to receive any substantial increase: it comprises 17.5% of the national budget, with 58.8% being spent on personnel and the remaining 41.2% being devoted to equipment and investment. (This proportion will only change slightly by 1982 - the figures being 55.7% and 44.3%, respectively.)⁴³

a. The Army

The brunt of the President's reorganization program has been felt by the Army. It is currently undergoing an unprecedented restructuring. To increase its mobility and combat-readiness, the Army is no longer divided into separate maneuver and territorial forces; these are being consolidated into 16 new general-purpose divisions. Unlike before, the regional commander is now in control of all the ground forces in his region regardless of their operational mission.⁴⁴ The emphasis of the Army's program for this year

is unit training, with a projected goal of 90 days in the field for each unit. Some commentators estimate that this increased operational activity will require sacrifices in new equipment acquisitions. Despite this, some notable developments during the 1977-82 period will include the issue of the first Roland low-altitude SAM systems to a divisional anti-air regiment, the formation of an experimental battery of 155mm rapid-fire cannons,⁴⁵ and the beginning of field-testing of the VAB forward-fighting vehicle (the first 121 are scheduled for delivery this fiscal year). Although the Pluton tactical nuclear missile program seems to have stagnated (it represents only one percent of this year's Army budget), the Army will finish equipping its fourth Pluton regiment and begin equipping a fifth.⁴⁶ General M  ry has announced that the tactical nuclear arsenal will be modernized by the development of a Super-Pluton missile (180km instead of approximately 100km range).⁴⁷

b. The Navy

There has been no major restructuring of the French Navy; rather, there has been a shift in its orientation. With the President emphasizing the importance of North-South relations, it is understandable that he should take a special interest in the Mediterranean region. For, as Jacques Vernant explains:

The Mediterranean area is of strategic importance for all countries that import their oil - and therefore their energy - as well as for those that export in order to finance their national development. As these countries become more and more important in the commercial world, whatever affects the [Mediterranean] cannot fail to cause repercussions on the worldwide level.⁴⁸

Accordingly, Giscard has quantitatively doubled French naval presence in the area (in terms of tonnage) since 1974, and he has qualitatively improved her representation by basing both of her aircraft carriers at Toulon.⁴⁹ Considering the President's prejudice against further expenditures on nuclear weapon systems, it is perhaps significant to note that the French Navy appears to be the only arm of the French Nuclear Strategic Forces to be programmed for any substantial technological upgrading. This is perhaps because the nuclear SLBM-equipped submarines are considered the ultimate guarantor of the French second-strike nuclear capability; should all the land and air-based nuclear forces be destroyed, there will always remain the submarines.⁵⁰ France currently has four operational missile-launching nuclear submarines, two of which will be equipped by this summer with the new M20 SLBM (3000km range and a 1MT thermonuclear warhead). This permits two of the submarines to be on deterrent patrol in the Atlantic Ocean almost permanently. A fifth submarine in the series is currently under construction and will be on operational patrol by January 1980. Plans for yet another in the series were cancelled so that funds could be devoted to the study and research of a new-generation submarine, one that will navigate at greater depths, present a less identifiable signature and carry improved detection and weapon capabilities. In addition, the Ocean Strategic Forces are expected to be equipped as early as 1985 with the M4 SLBM, which is already under development and expected to be MRV-configured and have a 25% increased range.⁵¹ Other noteworthy projects underway

for the Navy include the developmental flight-testing of the Super-Etandard naval strike fighter, 80 of which are scheduled for delivery beginning in late 1977 and ending in 1982,⁵² and the development of a new nuclear-powered carrier for helicopters and V/STOL aircraft. In addition, the ship-based Super-Etandard is to be equipped with tactical nuclear weapons within a few years, for the French general staff is currently giving some thought to the use of these weapons at sea, "where [they] lose much of their apocalyptic nature."⁵³ Such weapons could be used on seas bordering the European Continent, but they would then be tied to the overall European strategic nuclear scenario. The general staff is considering their use in a more "distant maritime theater, the Indian Ocean, for example"; this would allow for tactical nuclear weapons to be employed without necessarily involving any follow-on strategic nuclear action.⁵⁴ One French critic argues that by 1987 the French Navy will be at its lowest level since World War II (in terms of tonnage),⁵⁵ but this projection fails to acknowledge the possibility of qualitative improvements offsetting, at least in part, quantitative shortcomings.

c. The Air Force

The new Program Law appears to have benefited the French Air Force the least. There has already been a consolidation of the manned bomber fleet of the Strategic Air Forces (FAS). Effective 1 July 1976, the 36 Mirage-IV aircraft were regrouped from nine to six squadrons, and the Boeing KC-135F tankers

were grouped into a single squadron at Istres air base. The role of the manned bomber has apparently been extended until 1985, but it seems to have lost some of its prestige due to the perceived "dissuasive power" of the land and submarine-based ballistic missiles.⁵⁶ Of notable significance, however, is the fact that about a dozen Mirage-IV aircraft (based at Bordeaux-Merignac) have been converted into long-range strategic reconnaissance aircraft. Each aircraft is configured with eight high-precision cameras capable of day and night-time operations. There is also "the supercyclops": a version of the Mirage-IV that is configured with an infrared reconnaissance capability sufficient to "see through" usual camouflage. The Mirage-IV can operate at ranges of several thousand kilometers when refueled inflight by the KC-135s.⁵⁷ The Air Force is responsible for the land-based strategic S-2 IRBM deployed in two squadrons of nine missiles each, in hardened silos on the Plateau d'Albion. These two-stage, solid-propellant missiles are currently configured with a 150KT warhead and have a maximum range of 3000km.⁵⁸ Each missile is programmed for a single primary target; but it only takes two-and-one half minutes to reprogram it for any one of 20 or more alternates.⁵⁹

The Program Law allows the Air Force to have (outside of its strategic forces) only 450 combat aircraft. These are divided into 30 squadrons, 22 for Tactical Air Force and 8 for Air Defense. The emphasis in the Tactical Air Forces is to improve electronic countermeasure and air-to-surface attack capabilities. The Air Defense Forces need to improve their

capability to intercept high-speed/low-altitude targets. The French Air Defense Forces have complete radar coverage of the French territory and its approaches but only at high and medium altitudes.⁶⁰ A joint Air Defense/FAS underground headquarters is located at Taverny, northwest of Paris. The command post at Taverny relies on a sector communications network with multiple channels, that links it with all Air Force bases and governmental authorities. A similar center has been established in a granite formation at Mont Verdun, near Lyon. It could take over from Taverny with only seconds' notice and assure the same functions.⁶¹ Sixty percent of the French Air Forces can be operational within three hours of an alert.⁶² The IRBMs on the Plateau d'Albion are to be launched one minute after receipt of the red alert signal from the supreme commander, the President of the Republic.⁶³

To meet current Air Force requirements, a number of projects are already in progress. An air defense data-processing and presentation system (STRIDA) is being developed.⁶⁴ The first series production of the Franco-German Alphajet (trainer/light ground attack aircraft) will begin sometime in late 1977 or early 1978,⁶⁵ with 142 deliveries scheduled for the 1977-82 time frame.⁶⁶ The new Mirage-2000 interceptor is scheduled for its first flight in early 1978,⁶⁷ with first series production to begin early in 1980.⁶⁸ The Super Crotale ("Rattlesnake") SAM will be ready for delivery after 1982. And the study of the 200KT medium-range (100km) nuclear standoff missile will be completed by 1978. It is to be operational onboard the Mirage-2000 by 1985.⁶⁹ According to General

Elie Humbert, a commander of one of the Plateau d'Albion missile complexes, French authorities are also considering a new land-based mobile missile which would operate from a maze of underground tunnels on the periphery of France. ⁷⁰

6. French and NATO Defense Policies: Convergence?

At a session of the Atlantic Council in 1976, the Secretary General of NATO, Joseph Luns, congratulated President Giscard d'Estaing on his military program, not only for its scope but also for its orientation and its accent on reinforcing the conventional forces.⁷¹ It would appear that Giscard's Defense Policy of 1976 has many fundamental points in common with the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance Defense Policy of 1975. (It is interesting to note that the NATO defense policy was announced in May of 1975, and that just two months later the French President ordered a major review of his nation's defense plans.) The similarities become almost glaringly apparent as one reads the NATO document:

...deterrence to all forms of aggression cannot be based upon strategic nuclear forces alone...The Alliance must be able to respond in an appropriate manner to aggression of any kind; the response must be effective in relation to the level of force used by the aggressor ...[NATO defense calls for] a balanced force structure of interdependent strategic nuclear, theater nuclear and conventional force capabilities...however, major emphasis is placed on maintaining and improving Alliance conventional forces...This will require some modest annual increase in real terms in defense expenditures.⁷²

In a recent interview, the Supreme Commander of NATO forces in Europe, General Alexander Haig, reportedly stressed that the key to NATO's policy is doubt and uncertainty; NATO must keep the Soviets guessing as to which one of a number of responses it might use to counter any given threat.

He emphasized the need for troops to be operationally ready, "to be in the right place at the right time." He also suggested that NATO nations commit themselves now to coping with the Soviet challenge by increasing their defense spending by five percent.⁷³ Giscard's defense program coincides so closely with all these priorities (even down to France's programmed 5.5% annual increase of the defense budget) that one is tempted to examine Franco-Allied military relations a bit further to determine if these words are manifest in any cooperative actions. For the political reasons explained earlier, the answer will not be found in any officially proclaimed "reintegration of French military forces with NATO," rather in ad hoc, pragmatic arrangements between France and her allies.

The Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces has stated that "an independence of decision...does not necessarily lead to an autonomy of action." Explaining that France left the integrated NATO military command structure in order to gain greater freedom of decision, he pointed out that France continues to participate in all other Alliance activities, even to the extent of maintaining liaison missions at the major levels of military command; it has withdrawn only from the integrated military organization proper.⁷⁴

Two notable figures in French defense matters have voiced strong skepticism of France's ability to stand, in fact, as a true military neutral while maintaining her membership in the North Atlantic Alliance system. Raymond Aron points out that if France had really wanted to be neutral,

she would have withdrawn from the Alliance in 1969, when each member nation was supposed to review the preceding 20 years and determine the desirability of continuing its membership. Instead, in June 1974, France joined the rest of the Alliance in signing the Declaration on Atlantic Relations which states that:

...the members of the Alliance reaffirm their conviction that the North Atlantic Treaty provides the indispensable basis for their security...the members of the Alliance reaffirm that their common defense is one and indivisible. An attack on one or more of them...shall be considered an attack against them all...⁷⁵

M. Aron goes on to bemoan the lack of any precise military doctrine in France because no one has been able to resolve the question of why, within the context of the Alliance, a state has to defend itself and not be protected by its Allies. He makes the significant suggestion that there has been a covert resolution of this problem through some kind of secret intergovernmental solution which probably involves "the divulgence of certain orders given to the French forces stationed in Germany."⁷⁶ (The French Army deploys about 58,000 men in two mechanized divisions to West Germany; these forces, not substantially affected by the new Program Law, remain under strict French command.)⁷⁷ General Stehlin also pursued this argument by saying:

Since France is out of NATO and its military forces are not integrated with the allies' order of battle or the NATO forward defense strategy, it would be unimaginable that France could use her tactical nuclear weapons (which would risk impacting somewhere near Stuttgart, for example) without an explicit understanding with her Western partners ...[Emphasis added]⁷⁸

Let us now direct our attention to the current condition of French involvement in European military affairs; does the resulting evidence support or disprove the above-cited suspicions of special arrangements and "understandings" between France and her allies?

7. France and the North Atlantic Assembly

Although France is often portrayed as having broken off all contact with the North Atlantic Alliance system, in fact nothing could be more misleading. To begin with, France, like all other NATO countries, sends parliamentary delegates to the North Atlantic Assembly. This is an interparliamentary forum where delegates from the member-country parliaments meet regularly to discuss issues of common interest. Every nation has a representative on each of the Assembly Committees. While the Assembly has no formal relationship with the rest of NATO and cannot therefore automatically receive information or reports from the NATO Council or its Committees,⁷⁹ the Assembly does provide the Council with recommendations on a yearly basis.⁸⁰ (See Figure 2.)

The French delegates appear to be taking their role in the Assembly quite seriously. Although they have typically been elected to only one committee chairmanship during the period 1974-77, the French have been successfully voted into one of the Assembly's two vice-presidential seats for the past two years, and from 1967 until 1974 the Assembly Treasurer was a Frenchman. The French delegation appears to be a very high-caliber, stable group. Some of the members have been with the Assembly since 1966 and some are important figures

NATO CIVIL AND MILITARY STRUCTURE

North Atlantic Assembly

NATO Council
- DPC -

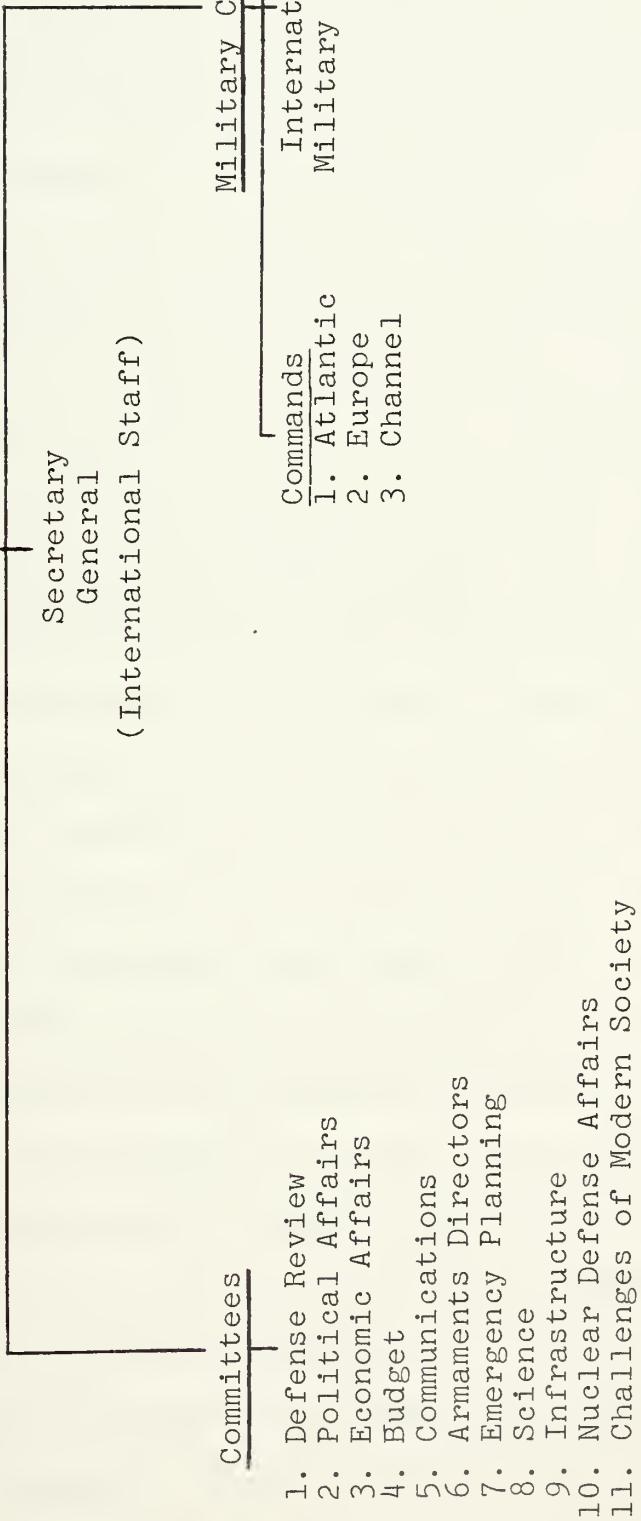


Figure 2.

(Adapted from NATO Handbook February 1976, pp. 36 & 37.)

such as M.Bernard Destremau (French Secretary of State to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the Defense Committee of the Western European Union).⁸¹ Under French initiative a series of practical steps have been taken to bring the Assembly into closer and more regular contact with the national Permanent Representatives to NATO and with the Secretary General of NATO and his Secretariat.⁸² To be sure, these contacts between French parliamentarians and NATO officials are not the secure government-to-government or military-to-military channels necessary for the coordination of military plans and operations which Raymond Aron suggests must exist. But the fact remains that they are important channels through which the French government can learn of NATO's military policies and can perhaps effect some indirect influence. For, the NATO Assembly committees discuss such problems as the current strategic relationship between the U.S. and the USSR, interalliance problems (including tactical nuclear weapons, defense cooperation, U.S. troops in Europe and the special status of France and Iceland), and the implications for NATO of the 1973 Middle East conflict.⁸³ Committee members visit NATO facilities throughout the alliance and receive briefings from the commander-in-chiefs of the various NATO commands. Lately there has been some allied concern regarding the possibility that Eurocommunist parliamentarians from Italy and France may one day become delegates to such organizations as the NATO Assembly.

It should be noted that within the context of the North Atlantic Assembly, France hosted a tour of French

nuclear installations in January 1975 for 24 Assembly delegates representing nine member countries. The Assembly newsletter reported afterwards that the visitors "were given a detailed insight into the organization and command structure of the French Strategic Nuclear Force."⁸⁴ (The itinerary for this tour very closely resembled that of the French Parliament's tour taken in 1974 and described by Paul Stehlin, then a member of Parliament.)

8. France and NATO

The highest authority of the NATO structure is the NATO Council. One Permanent Representative (of Ambassadorial rank) from each member country sits on the Council and discusses all matters, both civil and military. At least, this was true until France and Greece withdrew from NATO's integrated military structure. Now, when civilian matters are being discussed in the Council, all 15 nations are represented. But when military matters dealing with NATO's integrated planning are to be considered by the Council, the French and Greek representatives leave, and the remaining 13 nations meet as the Defense Planning Committee.⁸⁵ While it appears that France is carefully excluded from NATO nuclear planning activities (i.e. the Nuclear Defense Affairs Committee, the Defense Planning Committee, the Military Committee and the Nuclear Planning Group), she participates in all other NATO committees outside the military planning and command structure.⁸⁶ As an example of her participation in non-nuclear/defense-related NATO activities, one can note her considerable contribution to the development of NADGE:

a single, integrated semi-automatic Air Defense system for NATO. Designed to provide continuous early warning and tracking of hostile aircraft and missiles, the system involves a large number of sites that supplement and modernize air defense elements of nine European NATO countries. It follows a continuous North-South sweep through Norway, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Italy, Greece and Turkey. However, France is "integrated" only with respect to reporting; she will not participate in the control of retaliatory forces.⁸⁷ When France was asked to join in the development of NATO's integrated communications system (NICS), she refused.⁸⁸

France continues to contribute to the NATO Logistics Data Bank, which the Alliance maintains as an inventory of the industrial potential of member countries and which aids standardization efforts. There is an annual program whereby the French Ministry of Defense provides computerized input to NATO, using standardized NATO procedures and nomenclature. The prestigious French daily Le Monde reports that some Frenchmen dislike furnishing the information, but "the French Ministry of Defense reminds them that France is still a member of the Atlantic Alliance."⁸⁹

On the subject of standardization, NATO formed EUROGROUP in 1968 in an effort to deal with specific problems concerning closer defense cooperation between the European NATO members. Since EUROGROUP is a child of the Defense Planning Committee, France was not included. However, the French

government realizes that no European arms industry (and particularly not her own) can survive outside the potentially lucrative program for standardizing the production and procurement of NATO's arms.⁹⁰ It is therefore obvious that France wanted to be part of this collective venture, but for a reason of her own: France does not see the problem of standardization in the same light as do the rest of her allies. For France, this is a topic of purely economic consequence, as explained by M.Jean-Laurens Delpech, Ministerial Delegate for Armaments:

For France...standardization means the group of rules and procedures that permit the production of unified and interchangeable elements. But NATO defines it as the procedure by which the member nations can realize the closest possible cooperation of resources furnished by research, study and development; it is the procedure that will allow them to adopt on the largest possible scale...common (or compatible) administrative and logistical procedures on the operational level; common (or compatible) technical procedures and criteria; common (or compatible or interchangeable) arms, materials, parts and supplies; common (or comparable) tactical doctrine, complete with a corresponding structural compatibility.⁹¹

In the face of such intransigence, NATO conceived of the European Programme Group which takes the project of standardization out of the realm of the military-related EUROGROUP activities and puts it into a more neutral sphere of Atlantic Alliance cooperation.⁹² France can also freely become a member of an Ad Hoc Committee on Equipment Interoperability that has been set up under the direction of the NATO Deputy Secretary General.⁹³

There is however, another organization that has been serving as a forum for French-EUROGROUP cooperation since

the founding of EUROGROUP. This organization, FINABEL,⁹⁴ was first established in 1953 by an agreement between the Army Chiefs of Staff of France, Italy, Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. (Germany joined in 1956 and Britain in 1972.) The Purpose of the organization is to coordinate views on military equipment characteristics as well as to reach agreements on such matters as logistics and tactics. FINABEL is headed by a French Army Colonel, the headquarters is in Brussels, and the official language is French. The overall direction and final approval of FINABEL work is given by a Chiefs-of-Staff Committee which meets, in principle, once a year. A Principal Military Experts Committee (meeting on the one-star level) functions on behalf of the Chiefs-of-Staff Committee to generally supervise and control the activities of the Working Groups and Groups of Experts. The tasks are divided according to weapon-type and mission; for example: surface-to-surface artillery, night vision devices, armored personnel carriers, etc. There is also a Logisticians Committee which reports directly to the Chiefs-of-Staff Committee on logistic studies.

This work and the tactical, mission-oriented approach to armaments cooperation is very similar to that pursued by NATO representatives in EUROLONGTERM, a subgroup of EUROGROUP. In fact, when NATO began developing its defense plans and programs for the 1990s and realized that these included arms standardization, NATO wanted France to participate in EUROGROUP, the organization in charge of the project. Since EUROGROUP was the product of a Defense Planning Committee

meeting, France refused on the basis that it was too closely associated with NATO's integrated military activities.

FINABEL was chosen as a forum for these discussions since it includes France, whose alignment and cooperation was deemed imperative.⁹⁵

When a project for standardization is agreed upon within EUROGROUP, the subsequent EUROGROUP document is translated into French and submitted to FINABEL for its consideration. (This entire procedure is done for the direct benefit of the French and for them alone. All the other members of FINABEL are also members of EUROGROUP and have already studied the project and formulated an opinion before it is ever submitted to FINABEL.) When a EUROGROUP document is received by FINABEL, it is assigned a FINABEL number in place of its EUROGROUP number and it is assigned to the appropriate task group. It is NATO's hope that even if the French do not opt to participate in the various EUROGROUP standardization efforts, at least they have thus been informed of the orientation of her allies' policies, tactics and plans; NATO hopes that this knowledge will serve to prevent France from pursuing a dangerously opposite military orientation isolated from that of her allies - a possibility that could too easily occur if France is allowed to remain out of touch with current NATO defense planning.

On the formal, official military level, France has established important bilateral arrangements with certain of the NATO countries, such as the cooperation agreement with West Germany.⁹⁶ The two armies train together on occasion.⁹⁷

In addition, France maintains military missions at the various NATO Commands. These include the French Military Mission to the NATO Military Committee and the mission to SHAPE. Although these missions are generally termed "liaison" in nature, it appears that there can unfortunately be no real, two-way "exchange" of information. Recent interviews with two senior NATO officers (one American, the other German; one assigned to SHAPE during the 1960s and early 1970s, the other assigned to FINABEL from 1974 to 1976) reveal the mood of frustration that prevails among NATO's decision-makers regarding France's special place in the alliance.⁹⁸ Realizing that the French liaison officers are not at liberty to give anything in return, NATO, for fear of allowing France unknowingly to go astray, invites her nonetheless to selected meetings of the Military Committee and SHAPE and puts her on the distribution list for certain selected military documents.⁹⁹ But it is always a special case, necessitating a special inquiry into the releasability of information, translation of documents, etc. NATO officials lament that communication is hampered by the fact that no one feels he knows what can be discussed with the French and what cannot. Viewed from the French perspective, however, the arrangement seems quite satisfactory, for they are able thus to receive far more information than if they were not present at all. And, this allows France to keep up to date on some of the allied defense plans while at the same time maintaining the politically crucial image of independence. The success of this divorce from the dictates of the interallied military command structure is manifested

in the Allies' inability to persuade France to acquiesce or to give any indication of support to NATO military plans. For example, when the French are approached regarding the use of French territory for contingency purposes, they refrain from giving any concrete sign of approval.¹⁰⁰ The impression that France is operating independently in a most favorable collective forum was very firmly conveyed by the comments of the two officers interviewed.

Detailed coordination would also seem imperative in strategic nuclear planning. In the event of a nuclear attack on Europe from the Soviet Union, the U.S., NATO and France would probably all launch their strategic bombers, strategic and tactical missiles, and cruise missiles. With no prior collaboration regarding the planned flight routes or projected targets, the allied forces would risk mutual destruction as they flew through the chaotic nuclear holocaust over Eastern and Western Europe. It seems reasonable to expect that somewhere there does exist at a very high level, and stamped with the highest security classification, a close cooperative planning effort between NATO's nuclear powers. But if it does exist, French domestic political forces would require that any such cooperation be well guarded against disclosure to the French public and the world.

Only recently has there been even the slightest hint of a French shift towards more positive interaction on the military operations level. The Paris daily Le Monde reported earlier this year that the French Navy has subjected itself to NATO inspections and inventories "all along."¹⁰¹

During the major French air defense exercise, DATEX 1976, the final phase of the exercise involved a massive attack on French territory by sea forces including the U.S. Sixth Fleet and the air forces of Belgium, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Canada and the U.S. 17th Air Force.¹⁰² In 1975, a French squadron was a "guest team" in the 2ATAF/4ATAF photo-reconnaissance competition ROYAL FLUSH XVIII.¹⁰³ During 1976, French forces participated in TEAM WORK 76 and DISPLAY DETERMINATION, two large-scale air-naval exercises which took place within the general framework of maneuvers organized on the pattern of NATO's AUTUMN FORGE.¹⁰⁴ In a newspaper interview earlier this year, Brigadier General Fricaud-Chagnaud, French military attaché to Washington, stated that at least one French regiment had also participated in NATO's 1976 REFORGER exercise.¹⁰⁵

C. PLAN OF ACTION

Since 1972 there have been some major revisions to the original Leftist plans for national defense as spelled out in the Common Program. The reasons are fairly straightforward. The terms used in the 1972 agreement on defense policy were chosen for their ambiguous quality in order to provide three different political parties with a minimum basis for common action. As the March 1978 elections came in view, however, the PCF became concerned for its weakened position in the Union and began to concentrate on the necessity of rendering more precise the terms of the program with which it would be associated should the Leftist Union win the elections.

1. Force de Frappe

In 1972 one of the new points upon which both the PS and the PCF could agree was their common opposition to the French nuclear strike force. Their reasons for opposition were fundamentally different: the Socialists, because of humanitarian and moral grounds; the Communists, because of "internationalist" ideological opposition to any non-Soviet nuclear forces on the European continent. Since 1972, however, these party positions have changed.

The PCF abruptly ended its anti-force de frappe campaign in April of 1976. This does not mean the Party began endorsing the nuclear program; it merely ceased condemning it.¹⁰⁶ In a January 1977 article entitled "French Communism's 'New Policy'", PCF foreign-policy leader Jean Kanapa conspicuously omitted any reference to the force de frappe, preferring instead to criticize Giscard d'Estaing for having "abandoned General de Gaulle's defense strategy of tous azimuts."¹⁰⁷ Four months after the publication of this article, the PCF was ready to break out of its secrecy and announce a fundamentally new plan for the defense of France. As noted above, Jean Kanapa revealed the new policy in a report to the PCF Central Committee on May 11, 1977. Regarding the force de frappe, he said:

...[France's nuclear strike force] now represents the only real deterrent against any threat of aggression which the country will have for some time to come ...Considering the present state of national defense and the lack of a collective security system in Europe we are definitely in favor of the maintenance of nuclear force's operational capability at a quantitative level which could be determined only by the requirements of the country's security and independence (such

preservation implies maintaining nuclear arms and providing for scientific and technological progress). This level will...be situated at the minimum necessary...Taking into account the construction of the planned sixth missile-launching submarine, this point has already been reached. Mirage-IV aircraft will not be replaced once they become obsolete...

The Pluton tactical missiles will in no case be transferred outside the national territory [of France]...

...It will be necessary to render [the French nuclear force] really independent. This would imply...equipping it with an independent detection system in the event of an attack and an independent locating system for warships...Technically, France would be able to acquire this equipment...through the construction of observation radar aircraft (which would be used only in the event of a crisis) and the putting into orbit of three satellites whose task would be to observe, pinpoint and transmit information.

The nuclear military doctrine will again become a deterrent strategy in the strict meaning of the word... The nuclear strategy is an omnidirectional strategy which does not determine in advance any main adversary...The determination of targets and the orientation of missiles will be reexamined. Furthermore, the present 'anti-city' strategy...will be abandoned...

The decision about using nuclear arms cannot be left to one man--the President--as is the case now... The responsibility for such a decision should be left to a special high committee consisting of the President, the Prime Minister, the National Defense Minister, ministers representing the governmental coalition and the Chief of the General Staff...¹⁰⁸

This policy reversal was justified by PCF Secretary General Georges Marchais on 2 June, when he said:

...As a communist party, as a working class, we are very attached to peace, to security, to peaceful coexistence, to disarmament. The workers have nothing to gain from the arms race. The workers favor peace... Nevertheless...since we do not live in a world where universal and controlled disarmament exists, we have a duty to guarantee the security of our country, of its territory and its people. Consequently, France must have a national defense.

...Because of the policy pursued by the [past governments] which favored a nuclear strike force, we have practically no conventional army left. According to

specialists, if we were to find ourselves in a situation similar to the one which we experienced in 1940, France's power to resist would be less than it was then. I need say no more.

This being the case, we considered that we had a duty to make the necessary decision, namely, to allow our country to have a real defense, a real force of dissuasion. Consequently, we pronounced ourselves in favor of retaining the nuclear strike force...¹⁰⁹

Realizing the impact these Communist policy proposals were having on the French public at large, Marchais tried to attenuate the Party's position somewhat on 10 August by declaring that France would promise to abandon her anti-city strategy and promise to refrain from being the first to launch nuclear weapons, but only if all other nuclear powers of the world would make the same promises.¹¹⁰

Kanapa's announcement caught the French Socialist Party by surprise. The Party had not planned on making any pre-election revision to the defense policy section of the Common Program; the 1972 negotiations had proven this area to be one particularly lacking in possibilities for agreement and joint planning. But once the Communists opened the debate, the PS accepted the challenge. By July 1977, specialized PS study groups were ready with a preliminary Socialist Party defense plan: the defense of France should be composed of a strategic nuclear force, a popular mobilization force and an active defense force.¹¹¹

Looking first at the argument supporting the necessity of a strategic nuclear force, one reads:

There exist today...two great world powers which, while alternating between negotiations and arms races, have between them a balance of terror that has made a direct attack on either of their territories an

impossibility. But there is the hypothesis of a limited war using tactical nuclear weapons on territory which would be to them foreign soil. It is in the interest of France that she refuse to risk being a part of that "foreign" battleground. This situation justifies the maintenance of the French nuclear dissuasive force.

French strategic nuclear dissuasion is based on the postulate that the conquest of France would cost an aggressor a sizeable risk to his own human and industrial resources...The role of such a French force is, in the event of a crisis to force a potential aggressor to the negotiating table.¹¹²

(It is important to remember that this pro-nuclear argument was written by a study group and has not yet been incorporated into official PS policy.)

For almost 20 years, the French Socialist Party has been an opponent of all types of nuclear weapons. It was in character, therefore, for Mitterrand to offer this reply to the French Communists' sudden enthusiasm for the force de frappe:

Some socialists, including myself, wonder whether nuclear arms are not a Maginot line - where a feeling of safety and security prevails...¹¹³

Mitterrand maintains, in any case, that the retention of the nuclear strike force is an issue to be decided by the entire French electorate (i.e., by referendum) after the March elections.¹¹⁴ In answer to the tous azimuts strategy of employment, Mitterrand has said, "I do not see the need to point our missiles at our own allies."¹¹⁵ Other PS officials argue that targeting on a worldwide scale would seriously diminish the effectiveness of the relatively few French weapons. Furthermore, to "neutralize" the French nuclear force as the Communists have proposed doing (by rendering it strictly national and omnidirectional), would be to rob it

of its dissuasive nature and thus of any chance of contributing to the establishment of an equilibrium in Europe.¹¹⁶

Now that the Union of the Left has broken apart, it is doubtful that the PS and the PCF will be able to reach any general agreement on defense policy before March of 1978. When the talks ended in September 1977, the two sides had established the basic principles of their respective defense plans which were summarized as follows by Le Monde:

[The position of the PS and MRG]

- Universal and controlled general disarmament is the government's objective.
- Action will be taken to organize international negotiations that will lead to this disarmament.
- In the meantime, nuclear armament will be maintained in its current state with the final decision belonging to the French people. Mr. Mitterrand has suggested recourse to a referendum.
- Refusal of the tous azimuts policy.

[The position of the PCF]

- France must become involved in the disarmament conferences.
- Nuclear armament will be maintained and procedures adopted to render it independent.
- Approval of the tous azimuts defense policy and refusal to integrate the nation's defense with any bloc whatsoever.
- Refusal of recourse to the referendum.¹¹⁷

The Communists have consistently maintained that "we in no way intend to substitute adherence to the Warsaw Pact for membership in the Atlantic Pact. We absolutely reject this alternative."¹¹⁸ The PS leadership is not entirely convinced, however, for the PCF proposal that France promise to refrain

from being the first to use nuclear weapons closely resembles a Warsaw Pact proposal of 1976.¹¹⁹

If the Left should win in 1978, would NATO have any allies in the new government?

2. NATO

a. PCF

As discussed earlier, the French Communist Party officially agreed in the 1972 Common Program to respect the current alliance arrangements of France while seeking the simultaneous dissolution of both the Warsaw and North Atlantic Pacts. These public assurances, however, do not preclude France withdrawing from NATO should the opportunity present itself. In 1969, the North Atlantic Alliance celebrated its 20th anniversary and all members became free to choose between continued participation in or withdrawal from the Alliance; the PCF pressed for "non-renewal" of France's membership!²⁰ In Georges Marchais' 1974 book entitled Le Programme du Parti Communiste Francais, one reads:

It is profoundly dangerous that recent history has placed our country in a very unilateral network of relations - by that I mean the Atlantic Alliance led by the United States and the little Europe of the big capitalists. All the same, we do not plan to cut these ties like you cut a knot with a sword. But we do say it is high time to stop this sliding towards national abdication...The men in the current 'governmental' majority have carried out a surreptitious reintegration of France in NATO...

It is to be feared that things will go still further and that, tomorrow, with Mr. Giscard d'Estaing, France will be living on Washington time and will find herself enclosed by the iron ring of a new West European Holy Alliance...

Passionately attached to the independence of our country, we say: it is not in Washington, or Brussels, or Moscow - in spite of the ties of solidarity that

unite us with the first socialist people in history - that French policy should be decided. It is in Paris, in the capital of France and no where else!

That is why, with respect for France's current alliances, a democratic government will begin immediately to put the country on the road to independence from every politico-military bloc whatsoever.¹²¹

Two years later, French Communist Jacques Denis declared that the PCF would demand France be withdrawn from the Atlantic Alliance the moment détente should begin to falter.¹²² One month after this statement, the PCF decided that, while it saw "no incompatibility as such," should the participation of Communists in the French government cause France's Atlantic Treaty partners to consider it necessary to renegotiate the terms of the Alliance, the Leftist government of France would welcome such an approach to the problem.¹²³ Jean Kanapa wrote in January 1977:

A government which includes the Communists will guarantee [France's] security through an up-to-date defense policy using all the necessary means at its disposal, a security which would be genuinely national, one not integrated into NATO (in accordance with the provisions adopted in 1966)...

French Communists feel that France should propose to the Soviet Union and other countries which are signatories of the Warsaw Treaty the conclusion of nonaggression pacts and other treaties not to resort to force.¹²⁴

In Kanapa's landmark speech of 11 May 1977, he stated that:

The maintenance of the 'independent' nuclear force makes it...indispensable to put an end to all the numerous albeit discreet measures which have led to de facto reintegration of France into NATO, especially with respect to determination of strategies. It also goes without saying that any form of 'joint European defense' must be ruled out, since such an orientation would not only lead to greater integration of France into Atlantic strategy but would also allow the Federal Republic of Germany access to nuclear arms...

German imperialism has already become a financial, economic and even military giant since its power in the

military sphere is now considerable...Giscard d'Estaing's policy, whose aim is to turn France into a stepping stone for West Germany, is...a policy of national capitulation, a policy of the old right...whose descendants exclaimed: "Sooner Hitler than the Popular Front."

The omnidirectional defense doctrine has been replaced by the doctrine of "forward battle" side by side with the Bundeswehr against the socialist countries which have been marked out as the only potential adversary.¹²⁵

b. PS

Robert Pontillon, the National Secretary of the Socialist Party in charge of international relations, revealed during a press interview in October 1977 that one of the fundamental causes for the September dismemberment of the Union of the Left was an irreconcilable disagreement over defense policy. He stated that:

The Kanapa report...does not only represent an inadmissible distortion of the 1972 agreements in this area: it is sketching out a defense policy that is hopeless, imaginary and dangerous.¹²⁶

According to Pontillon, there were five key defense points which the Socialists found to be "inadmissible": the tous azimuts doctrine, the counter-force instead of counter-city strategy, the collective decision governing nuclear force employment, the promise of non-first use of nuclear weapons and the abandonment of the Nadge system.¹²⁷

In 1972, the PS and the PCF accepted the same commitment to respect France's alliance obligations. Whereas the PCF apparently plans for this respect to be as short-term as possible, the PS regards French membership in the Atlantic Alliance as a relatively long-term, necessary evil. Reportedly, the entire Socialist Party agrees on that one point.¹²⁸ In May 1977, the left wing of the PS (CERES) was

known to be undecided as to the military commitments France should accept vis-a-vis her allies; the rest of the Party, however, was in favor of the participation of French conventional troops in a "battle in Europe" and not opposed to a defense plan involving European cooperation.¹²⁹ By July, the PS special study group on defense was proposing the idea that, in addition to the nuclear strike and popular mobilization forces,

[France must have] an ability for active defense... [which] will permit us to fulfill our duties, namely vis-a-vis the Atlantic Alliance and the Treaty of Brussels...

It would seem both dangerous and of little value to provide a priori a tactical nuclear contribution to the NATO zone...because such a position would lead us inexorably into the process of transfer of decisionmaking power, paralyzing our freedom of choice.

This kind of defense appears to conform to the political goals of security and freedom of action which are so necessary to the French Left.

There is reason to respect the moral motives of partisans for disarmed neutrality, but it is to be feared, however, that such an example would not be followed by the other nations. It therefore seems unfortunately preferable that, all the while conducting an active policy of security and disarmament, we must keep a full stock of means by which we can stop the beginning of a war.¹³⁰

Mitterrand has stated that he does not believe in "the total autonomy of French defense."¹³¹ Pontillon explained that, for the Socialist Party,

For France to fall back on her borders makes no sense at all. For, the "threat," as the military say, can take two shapes: a direct pressure on our borders, or else on the borders of countries in the Alliance of which we are a member. Well, in getting out of the Alliance, we accepted that our neighbors could be attacked without our having to budge, and that we would defend ourselves alone in the hypothetical case of a direct threat to our borders. That is unthinkable...

Mitterrand...believes in alliances, and national dissuasion only has meaning for him insofar as it is a part of a system of alliances and solidarity. What Mitterrand says is this: even having a national nuclear strike force, France cannot reason separately from her alliances. National independence can be nothing more than autonomy of decision.¹³²

3. French Armed Forces

One part of the defense policy of the Common Program over which there was never any disagreement between the PS and the PCF was the establishment of a conscripted military force¹³³ in which every citizen is obliged to serve, but only for six months¹³⁴ within his own geographical region and strictly for the defense of the nation (i.e. no internal peace-keeping functions).¹³⁵ PS and PCF consensus ended here, however, for their plans for employing and equipping the armed force differed significantly.

a. PCF

PCF Secretary General Marchais stated in 1974,

Far from wanting to "break" the army, we want to give the nation the army it needs and, to do this, we want to make sure the army gets the necessary armaments, structures and conditions for activity...¹³⁶

But then in the next breath, the Party speaks of "lighten[ing] the heavy burden which today is forced upon the masses by military expenditure"¹³⁷ and "manag[ing] to do whatever is necessary without increasing the military budget as compared with the budget as a whole."¹³⁸ The Communist Party also declares that it plans to exercise the strictest control over the military budget and to nationalize all the arms industries.¹³⁹

One of the French Communist Party leaders, Jean Marrane, wrote a book in 1977 entitled L'Armee de la France

democratique. Marrane reportedly states that all private armaments industries, as well as national defense-related banking and industrial centers, would be nationalized by a Leftist government. He bitterly criticizes French arms exports,¹⁴⁰ but he does not acknowledge that, even if the arms industries become nationalized, the unit costs for arms and equipment for French defense will be exorbitant if France is not allowed to sell sufficiently large quantities of arms, and therefore enjoy large-scale production. Marrane speaks of the future French armed forces being built on four "pillars": military service, military training, reserves and active duty. Each one is to be equal and indispensable. Following the Party line which assures an army "closely linked with the nation,"¹⁴¹ Marrane is criticized by a reviewer for having resorted to the use of a Gaullist tone when he enjoined every citizen to have "the fervent desire not to be left out of the army." And, as if he were from the Gaullist school of defense strategy, Marrane denounces the tactical nuclear missile Pluton which "keeps France from being the mistress of her strategic nuclear force."¹⁴²

b. PS

The Socialist Party also plans to nationalize the arms industries.¹⁴³ But whereas the PCF appears to be preoccupied with the economics of defense, a PS special study group has developed a philosophy of national defense:

The concept of security and defense must be based, first of all, on the will of the French people to refuse to submit to any form of foreign oppression whatsoever... The national will is manifested by the national mobilization force. This force will be constituted essentially

of draftees carrying out a short national service in a decentralized geographic framework...Decentralization should permit logistic and bureaucratic procedures to be reduced to an indispensable minimum. In case of need, this decentralization will permit a smooth mobilization, adapted to different situations and, if need be, differentiated according to the regions.

This popular mobilization force will take on a dissuasive value, because an eventual aggressor will realize that if he tries to penetrate onto our territory, he will have to face a series of aggressive actions that will lead to an unendingly growing number of men who will keep him from reaching his strategic objective. The concept of popular mobilization is founded on confidence in the people and is, consequently, incompatible with the notion of internal enemies.¹⁴⁴

X. PERSPECTIVE 1978

The purpose of this study was to discover the past and present foreign and defense policy orientations of the two major parties of the French Union of the Left in order to predict the most likely defense policy to expect from a Leftist government in France in 1978, should the Union win.

A. ELECTIONS

Since the breakdown of the Leftist Union appears to be due, to a large extent, to PCF maneuvers to that end, I do not expect to see any Communist participation in the next government of France. As explained in detail in earlier chapters, the Communists would be now only the junior - not the directing - partner in a coalition with the Socialists and the MRG. Since Mitterrand and the Socialist Party stubbornly refused to give in to PCF demands during the 1977 meetings for the revision of the Common Program, the PCF could not feel certain of the exact type of program with which it would become associated as a government participant.

It seems likely that the strong support that has been growing for the non-Communist Left over the past five years will not dissipate before March 1978. (In 1974, after the last presidential elections, many analysts speculated that had the voting age been lowered to 18 years old, Mitterrand would have won; for, polls showed he had strong support from the age group less than 21 years old. Two months after being elected Giscard d'Estaing lowered the age limit. This

could perhaps have an important effect on next year's outcome.)¹ Even though they are no longer a part of a winning coalition, the Socialists will still probably garner a large percentage of the votes.

Gaullist candidate Jacques Chirac originally campaigned primarily on the threat of Communist participation in government; now that the PCF is gone from the scene (albeit voluntarily), Chirac might be amenable to forming a last-minute Right-Center coalition. Giscard d'Estaing, however, understands the social and political forces alive in France today and he would probably be ready to name Francois Mitterrand his prime minister should the non-Communist Left make the expected gains at the polls. For, the possibility of a Center-non-Communist Left rapprochement has been a favorite idea of the President's for at least the last two years. He made it a central theme in his 1976 book Democratic francaise.

Mitterrand has been very careful to refrain from making any sign of truce with the current government; for, the leader of the Socialist Party must continue to appear sufficiently strong and dedicated to fundamental reforms and socialist ideology in order to attract a portion of the public that was planning to vote for the PCF. It is interesting to note that an October 1977 public opinion poll revealed that 43% of the people voting for the PS hoped the Party would turn away from the PCF and look to the Center for its allies.²

B. CABINET

Once the elections are over, it is possible that Mitterrand could be reconciled to the idea of sharing his government with a few moderate representatives of the Center. In the area of defense, I believe there would be no serious disagreement between Giscard and his Socialist Prime Minister. Of the three key national security ministries (Defense, Foreign Affairs, Interior), the Defense portfolio could be given to a Socialist like Charles Hernu, PS Minister of the Armed Forces. Should the Socialist Party succeed in garnering a strong portion of the vote, it is possible that the Foreign Affairs Ministry could also be headed by a Socialist. There has been mention made of two prime candidates for the post:³ the pro-U.S. Defferre⁴ or the Atlantiste Robert Pontillon.⁵ (Even before the break-up of the united Left, it was deemed very unlikely that a Communist would be named to either the Defense or the Foreign Ministry post. In his book Si demain la gauche..., Gaston Defferre mentions that

The only point made clear by Georges Marchais in 1974, at the time of the last presidential election, was that the Communists would not claim rights to any one of the three big ministries: Foreign Affairs, Interior, National Defense.⁶

In addition, an interview by the author with a senior French military officer revealed a sense of certainty in official French quarters that a Communist Party member would never be invited to fill any of the three key ministry posts of the 1978 government.)⁷

C. CONCORDE?

How well would the general defense and foreign policy orientations of Mitterrand coincide with those of Giscard d'Estaing? Both men are personally committed to the building of a strong, united organization of Europe, politically and economically. Both are advocates of close relations with the United States and the North Atlantic Alliance. Mitterrand and Giscard are patriots who support the retention of the force de frappe as a dissuasive force oriented eastward. Both currently envisage immediate, concerted efforts to rebuild the nation's conventional forces. The two men agree that France must retain her independence of decision in the event of war; but they also acknowledge that, in the event of war, there would be only one battlefield to be protected by all. Placing emphasis on a few socialist, internationalist themes, Mitterrand would probably press for permanent French representation at the disarmament and MBFR talks and a signature to the nuclear test ban treaty. As evidenced throughout this study, the French Socialists have strong faith in the power of negotiations and international conferences as methods for attaining peace. This should combine well with Giscard's propensity to call international meetings of European heads of state to discuss specific issues of immediate importance, rather than relying on more normal diplomatic channels.

The pro-US and Atlantiste orientations of such prominent Socialists as Defferre and Pontillon should also coincide effectively and profitably with Giscard's own well-demonstrated

preference for closer solidarity among Western European and Atlantic allies.

D. DEFENSE 1978

With a Socialist like Charles Hernu as Minister of Defense, the army would probably undergo some changes, depending on the degree of Socialist support that exists in Parliament to convince Giscard that reforms are really necessary. As mentioned earlier, the Socialists could decide to institute a regional, popular mobilization scheme of military service. This would coincide well with the Socialists' and Giscard's desire to build a strong national defense force tied firmly to the roots of French society. Such a mobilization plan, in addition, would hamper the development of a strong military institution that could threaten the existence of the governmental system, especially in the event the Left should return to a position of power and responsibility in the country. A senior French military officer recently said, however, that the armed forces of France would do nothing to oppose a Leftist government that had been voted into power. "We are only the instrument of the State; we are here to serve."⁸

It is interesting to note that the Socialist Party study groups proposed that this regional army be only one part of a greater defense scheme for the nation. Taking the example of Charles Hernu, he is one of the Socialists who strongly favors the integration of nuclear weapons into the overall French defense strategy.⁹ He is also one who worries about

the nation's "national insecurity" due to its weakness in conventional forces.¹⁰ The majority of the Socialist Party is like Hernu in totally rejecting the PCF's proposal that France promise non-first use of nuclear weapons; he maintains that there is too much imbalance already between the East and West European forces, and the existence of a French force de frappe serves to reestablish the equilibrium somewhat.¹¹ In November 1976, Hernu proposed to the Socialist Party that, should a Leftist government come to power in 1978, the Ministry of Defense should be made responsible only for the armed forces; a separate, politico-military headquarters would be created specifically to control the use of the nation's nuclear forces. This new headquarters would be in sovereign control of their use.¹²

If a Socialist like Hernu, Defferre or Pontillon should become Defense or Foreign Minister in the new government, he would be in a position to personally pass or veto any arms sale from a French industry. For, as director of the nation's defense or foreign affairs, he would sit on the Interministerial Commission for the Study of War Materials Exportation. All major equipment contracts must be approved by this commission, comprised of the Ministers of Defense, Foreign Affairs, Finance and External Commerce. Each member has a veto and one is sufficient to cancel a contract.¹³ Although the Socialists and Communists are traditionally against arms sales, there is reason to believe that if the Socialists came to power, they would not want to be responsible for the closing of many factories and the increased

unemployment that would result from wholesale cancellation of arms sales on the principle that it is not right. (The Communist-affiliated labor union, CGT, already supports arms sales in defiance of PCF directives to the contrary; they argue their first duty is to ensure jobs.)¹⁴ It is my belief that the Socialists would refrain from sending arms to direct belligerents in the Middle East during a war; but as far as continuing the arms sales to Iraq and Africa and major oil-exporting nations, I believe they will do so, if only due to the economics of the matter.

Finally, it appears that the United States would find a Giscard-Mitterrand government to be one of the most pro-US, pro-NATO governments that France has ever had. Unlike the chauvinistic nationalism and patriotism of the Gaullists and the Communists, the Socialists, as Annie Kriegel said, feel a certain affinity to the American idealistic character. There is one report that states the Socialists, in contemplating the future of France and NATO, came to the conclusion that "as and when necessary," they could always effectively get France into the Alliance by way of bilateral relations with the Americans.¹⁵

Mitterrand, throughout his statements, has been consistently in support of NATO. In August of 1977 he stated:

I deem it necessary that we be members of a security system, a defensive alliance, that conforms to our interests. To leave the Atlantic Alliance without having another alliance to go to does not make any sense. What other alliance can anyone suggest? Please let me know!¹⁶

E. CONCLUSIONS

Although the likelihood of a Leftist victory at the polls in 1978 has diminished, the possibility of a Center-Left coalition remains very much alive. The Paris daily Le Monde reported in November of 1977 that, in spite of the Leftist split, the PS and the MRG plan to continue their political alliance.¹⁷ It seems reasonable therefore to believe that the tremendous public support which has developed over the past five years in favor of the Socialist Party will not decrease significantly over the next four months. Opinion polls taken since the Leftist split tend to confirm this assessment of the political situation. If it is true that the PCF has indeed given up all desire of participating in a 1978 Socialist-dominated government, then even if the PCF should receive its predicted 19% of the votes, it would not challenge the Socialist bid for office. Should the PS emerge from the elections as the largest single party in France, it would be free, as an essentially social democratic party, to turn to the small MRG and Giscard's own center party for coalition support. Although Mitterrand denies the possibility of any such coalition in 1978, he has been quoted as describing his party in the following words:

The Socialist Party is the heir and successor to social democracy in France...The French Socialist Party...is not a Marxist party. If there are obvious differences to be made between German or Swedish social democracy and French Socialism, we are still members of the same family.¹⁸

The French Socialist Party and President Giscard d'Estaing share the same fundamental defense goals: i.e., the importance

of universal military service and the development of a well-trained and well-equipped conventional force; and a strong program for the defense of France that includes both a guarantee of independence of decision and membership in a viable collective security system (which today takes the shape of NATO).

Both Mitterrand and Giscard are recognized supporters of a united Europe and traditionally loyal friends of the Third World and the United States. The cause of democracy should have nothing to fear from the ascendency of the French Socialist Party to power in 1978.

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10. Tiersky, p. 151.
11. Werth. p. 223.
12. Dorothy Pickles, France and Algeria, pp. 28-29.

The Statute was an affirmation of French Algeria: Algeria is a group of departments. All inhabitants of French nationality enjoy, without distinction of origin or race or religion or language, the rights of French citizenship. A Governor-General is appointed by and responsible to the French Government. There is a new Algerian Assembly, half French and half Moslem, to deal with strictly Algerian matters, but major laws are made by the French Parliament. [The Governor-General does have the power to manipulate the vote so the Moslems can never have enough votes to outvote the French half of the Assembly.]

13. Duncan MacRae, Jr., Parliament, Parties, and Society in France 1946-1958, (St. Martin's Press, New York: 1967), p. 73.
14. Pickles, pp. 28-29.
15. Charles A. Micaud, Communism and the French Left, (Praeger Publishers, New York: 1963), p. 236.

16. Annie Kriegel, Communismes au miroir français, (1974), p. 174.
17. Kriegel, p. 172.
18. Kriegel, pp. 172-175.
19. Serfaty, p. 128.
20. Ambler, p. 167.
21. Paul-Marie de la Gorce, The French Army, (Braziller Inc., New York: 1963), p. 339.
22. George A. Kelly, Lost Soldiers, (The MIT Press, Cambridge: 1965), pp. 43-44.
23. de la Gorce, p. 376.
24. Tiersky, p. 152.
25. Francois Fejto, Dictionnaire des partis communistes et des mouvements révolutionnaires, (Casterman, Tournai: 1971), p. 93.
26. Serfaty, pp. 134-135.

Chapter VI

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2. de la Gorce, p. 364.
3. MacRae, pp. 75 and 79.
4. MacRae, pp. 74 and 78.
5. MacRae, pp. 74-75.
6. Kriegel, pp. 201-202.
7. Fauvet, p. 229.
8. Fauvet, p. 232.
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9. Fauvet, p. 232.
10. Francois Mitterrand, Ma Part de Vérité, (Fayard, Paris: 1969), p. 94.
11. MacRae, pp. 83, 84 and 115.
12. Fauvet, p. 238.
13. MacRae, pp. 83 and 117.
14. Fauvet, p. 238.
15. MacRae, pp. 117-118.
16. Werth, p. 575.
17. de la Gorce, p. 509.
18. Ambler, p. 331. Statement was taken from "Actualités d'Algérie," Contacts, March 1958, pp. 13-14.
19. de la Gorce, p. 377.
20. Ambler, p. 95.
21. de la Gorce, p. 397.
22. Kelly, p. 62.
23. Kelly, p. 62.

24. Werth, p. 641.
25. MacRae, pp. 123-125, 126.
26. Werth, pp. 613 and 641.
27. Ambler, p. 107.
28. Ambler, pp. 107-108.
29. Ambler, p. 123.
30. Ambler, p. 108.
31. Kelly, p. 61.
32. Werth, p. 575.
33. Ambler, p. 109.
34. MacRae, p. 119.
35. Werth, pp. 571-572.
36. Werth, pp. 613 and 627.
37. MacRae, p. 127.
38. MacRae, pp. 121 and 233.
39. Francois Fejto, The French Communist Party and the Crisis of International Communism, (The MIT Press, Cambridge: 1967), p. 38.
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42. MacRae, pp. 126 and 128.
43. MacRae, p. 233.
44. MacRae, p. 158.
45. Micaud, pp. 210-211.
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47. Micaud, pp. 210-211.
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52. de la Gorce, p. 432.
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54. MacRae, p. 150.
55. Tiersky, pp. 235-236.
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59. Fejto, p. 68.
60. Richard Johnson, The French Communist Party versus the Students, (Yale University Press, New Haven: 1972), p. 50.
61. Poster, p. 185.
62. Johnson, pp. 26-27.
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64. Fejto, p. 81.
65. Fejto, p. 74.
66. Micaud, p. 98.
67. Johnson, p. 29.
68. Fejto, p. 99.

Chapter VII

1. Tiersky, pp. 235-236.
2. Fejto, pp. 91, 92 and 115.
3. Fejto, pp. 127 and 130.
4. Tiersky, p. 237.
5. Tiersky, p. 237.
6. Tiersky, p. 238-240.
7. Tiersky, pp. 240, 242-243.
8. Tiersky, pp. 242-243.
9. Tiersky, p. 240.
10. Tiersky, pp. 243-244.
11. Tiersky, p. 243.
12. Kriegel, Chapter 11.
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14. Weit, p. 139.
15. Tiersky, p. 244.
16. William McLaughlin, "Regionalism and Revisionism in Western Europe," (The Research Departments, Radio Free Europe: 17 Mar 66), pp. 1-2.
17. R. Salloch, "The French CP and the Dialogue of the Left," (The Research Deparmentnets, Radio Free Europe: 10 Oct 66), p. 4.
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22. Tiersky, p. 249.
23. Tiersky, p. 249.
24. Tiersky, p. 251.
25. Tiersky, pp. 251-252.
26. Tiersky, p. 252.
27. Sondages, p. 36.
28. Tiersky, pp. 256-257.
29. Tiersky, p. 258.
30. Tiersky, p. 259.
31. de la Gorce, p. 408.
32. Pickles, p. 30.
33. Grosser, p. 379.
34. Grosser, pp. 379-382.
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The meetings were in Cairo: April and May
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48. Bulletin Intérieur du Parti Socialiste SFIO, Juin 1961, p. 18.
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53. Le Programme de la Fédération de la gauche démocrate et socialiste, (Les Cahiers de la Convention des Institutions Républicaines: Sept 1966), preface.
54. Le Programme de la Fédération de la gauche democrat et socialiste, pp. 23-24.
55. Mitterrand, p. 299.
56. Jean Charlot, The Gaullist Phenomenon: The Gaullist Movement in the Fifth Republic, (Praeger Publishers, New York & Washington: 1971), pp. 167-168.
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66. William McLaughlin, "A Tale of Two Parties," (The Research Departments, Radio Free Europe: 17 April 1972), p. 5.
67. "The Common Market and Unity of the French Left," (The Research Departments, Radio Free Europe: 17 April 1972), p. 5.
68. McLaughlin, p. 4.

69. Kriegel, p. 247.
70. Tiersky, p. 259.
71. Tiersky, p. 259.
72. Fejto, p. 97.
73. A recent interview with General Herve' Alphand (French Ambassador to the U.S. throughout the de Gaulle era) reveals that de Gaulle had been planning France's withdrawal from NATO for over a year.

In the interview, published in the 11-17 September 1977 issue of Le Nouvel Observateur, de Gaulle is quoted as having said:

(on 3 January 1965)

(p. 89) Under no circumstances will we accept a multilateral force or any substitute that will put our nuclear force under American control. If the [multilateral] project does materialize, that will give us a beautiful opportunity to pull out of NATO...

We'll be announcing, before 1969, our decision to no longer be associated with [NATO.] When this happens, the transition will not be dramatic. Because, in any case, we believe the Atlantic Treaty, or called another way, the Western alliance will continue to exist...but without the structures and institutions that have been added on to it.

(p. 92) The alliance must continue and I see no problem if the...American forces stationed in Germany stay there as long as they like...The United States [must] understand that our action isn't directed against them...We don't believe we'll be doing anything that will be against American interests...

Six months later, on the 7th of May, Alphand queried the President regarding the future of NATO and de Gaulle answered:

(p. 100) In any case, NATO will disappear for us by 1969. We'll announce it at the beginning of next year in such a way so as to give the necessary time for necessary arrangements to be made, because after that date there will no longer be any foreign troops on French territory, except for that we wish for and which will be under our control.

Alphand then asked, "But you haven't mentioned the Alliance itself--the Atlantic Pact?"

(p. 101) The General answered:

Sure I did - the Atlantic Pact will disappear also. If our partners are agreed to the idea, it will be replaced by bilateral accords; in this way we could conclude one with the Netherlands, etc...They will contain a clause saying, if one of the countries is attacked, the other will come to its help with all its forces.

74. Kriegel, p. 238.
75. "The French C.P., Moscow & France's Foreign Policy," (The Research Departments, Radio Free Europe: 1 March 1972), p. 1.
76. "The French C.P., Moscow & France's Foreign Policy," p. 2.
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78. Le Programme de la Fédération de la Gauche démocrate et socialiste, pp. 19, 20 and 23.
79. Mitterrand, pp. 297-298 and 304-305.
80. Fejto, p. 117.
81. Fejto, p. 142.
82. Fejto, pp. 154-155.
83. Fejto, p. 142.
84. Fejto, p. 142.
85. Fejto, p. 149.
86. Fejto, p. 162.
87. Fejto, p. 162.
88. Fejto, p. 162.
89. Kriegel, p. 236.
90. Fejto, p. 168.
91. Bulletin Intérieur du Parti Socialiste SFIO, June 1961, p. 8.
92. Le Programme de la Fédération de la Gauche démocrate et socialiste, p. 19.
93. Johnson, p. 83.

94. Weit, p. 139.
95. Tiersky, p. 290.
96. Kevin Devlin, "French CP Condemns Invasion," (The Research Departments, Radio Free Europe: 21 August 1968), p. 2.
97. Kriegel, p. 252.
98. Kevin Devlin, "The New Crisis in European Communism," Problems of Communism, November-December 1968, p. 58.
99. Devlin, "French CP Condemns Invasion," p. 2.
100. Devlin, "The New Crisis in European Communism," p. 59.
101. Devlin, "The New Crisis in European Communism," p. 59.
102. Devlin, "The New Crisis in European Communism," p. 62.
103. Devlin, "The New Crisis in European Communism," pp. 66 and 67.
104. Devlin, "French CP Condemns Invasion," p. 2.
105. Tiersky, p. 255.
106. Tiersky, p. 290.
107. Kriegel, pp. 251-252.

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2. Neil McInnes, Eurocommunism, (The Washington Papers, Vol. IV, No. 37, The Center for Strategic & International Studies, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.: 1976), p. 35.
3. Howard R. Penniman, ed., France at the Polls, (American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, Washington, D.C.: 1975), pp. 57 and 97.
4. Penniman, p. 62.
5. McInnes, p. 31.
6. McInnes, p. 31.
7. McInnes, p. 31.
8. Tiersky, "French Communism in 1976," p. 26.
9. McInnes, pp. 32-33.
10. Tiersky, "French Communism in 1976," p. 34.
11. Tiersky, "French Communism in 1976," p. 32.
12. McInnes, p. 33.
13. McInnes, p. 40.
14. McInnes, p. 41.
15. Thomas T. Hammond, "Moscow and Communist Takeovers," Problems of Communism, January-February 1976, p. 60.
16. McInnes, p. 40.
17. Tiersky, "French Communism in 1976," pp. 40-41.
18. Tiersky, "French Communism in 1976," p. 41.
19. McInnes, p. 41.
20. Tiersky, "French Communism in 1976," p. 41.
21. Annie Kriegel, Un Autre Communisme?, (Librairie Hachette, 1977), p. 87.

22. Kriegel, Un Autre Communisme?, p. 81.

23. Kriegel, Un Autre Communisme?, p. 83.

24. Kriegel, Un Autre Communisme?, p. 84.
On pages 23 to 25, Annie Kriegel argues that Eurocommunism is neither a "regional strategy" nor a "new variety of Communism, like Stalinism, Titoism, Maoism,..." Rather, it is "nothing more than a common temptation by a few Communist parties...to put some distance between themselves and the Soviet component of Communism; after all, the social composition and historical experiences of the Western European nations differ significantly from those to which the original Soviet model was applied. Kriegel states further that Eurocommunism is "the part being played by Communists in Europe's search for a distinct identity."

25. Foreign Broadcast Information Service, 13 December 1972, p. 26.

26. Tiersky, "French Communism in 1976," p. 47.

27. Kriegel, Un Autre Communisme?, pp. 91-92.

28. "Demain à la 'Une'", Paris Match, 21 August 1976, p. 26.

29. "Demain à la 'Une'", Paris Match, 18 September 1976, p. 35.
Note: C.E.R.E.S. is the Center for Socialist Study, Research and Education.

30. Raymond Tournoux, "Je m'apprête à devenir impopulaire," Paris Match, 25 September 1976, p. 48.

31. "Pour la 1ère fois des élections 'simulées' en France," Paris Match, 24 December 1976, p. 41.

32. "Pour la 1ère fois des élections 'simulées' en France," p. 41.

33. "Demain à la 'Une'", Paris Match, 24 December 1976, p. 70.

34. Philip W. Whitcomb, "French Left won't win, Premier predicts," Christian Science Monitor, 25 May 1977, p. 24.

35. Kriegel, Un Autre Communisme?, p. 179.

36. Ezra N. Suleiman, "The French Communist Party: Problems of Success," (unpublished paper prepared for the Conference on Eurocommunism and US Foreign Policy, San Diego, California: 15-16 April 1977), p. 1.

37. This interpretation was seconded by Dr. Gordon Wright during an interview at Stanford University on 4 November 1977.

38. Robert Schneider, "A quoi ont joué les communistes?", L'Express, 16-22 May 1977, p. 31.
39. Kriegel, Un Autre Communisme?, p. 167.
40. Michel Gonod, "Mitterrand plus fort et plus mystérieux que jamais," Paris Match, 1 July 1977, pp. 38 and 41.
41. Le Monde, (Sélection Hebdomadaire), 29 September-5 October 1977.
42. Jean Cau, "Comment va la gauche?", Paris Match, 8 July 1977, p. 54.
43. Michel Gonod, "Une singulière démarche de l'ambassadeur soviétique," Paris Match, 23 September 1977, p. 64.
44. Fernand Auberjonois, "French Socialists Pull Back from Coalition with the Communists," Monterey Peninsula Herald, 23 October 1977, p. 10B.
45. Raymond Barrillon, "La gauche et la majorité," Le Monde (Sélection Hebdomadaire), 29 September-5 October 1977, p. 1.
46. "French Leftists can't agree," The Christian Science Monitor, 11 November 1977, p. 4.
47. Don Cook, "Communism in Europe is in Disarray," Monterey Peninsula Herald, 23 October 1977, p. 1B.
48. "M. Berlinguer et la gauche française," Le Monde, 10 November 1977, p. 1.
49. Kriegel, Communismes au miroir français, p. 251.
On the same page, she emphasizes this idea with the statement: "[They want to be] concretely guaranteed against treacherous dreams upon which the hearts of the allies might feed, once the charm of unity has worn off."
50. "France's feuding Left losing voter support, new poll shows," Monterey Peninsula Herald, 10 October 1977, p. 5.
51. "Mitterrand doubtful of victory," The Christian Science Monitor, 7 November 1977, p. 28.

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10. "Extracts from the General Policy Declaration of the French Prime Minister, Mr. Jacques Chirac, to the National Assembly on 6 June, 1974," NATO Review, Aug 74, p. 35.
11. James O. Goldsborough, "The Franco-German Entente," Foreign Affairs, Apr 76, p. 501.
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13. Pierre M. Gallois, "French Defense Planning - The Future in the Past," International Security, Fall 1976, pp. 15-31.
14. Gallois, p. 18.

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17. Paul Stehlin, La France Désarmée, (Editions Calmann-Levy, Paris: 1974), pp. 109-110, 114 and 119. General Stehlin's thoughts are presented here as being representative of an entire school of French strategic thought. There should be no connection made here between General Stehlin's remarks and his later personal notoriety.
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28. Henry A. Kissinger, The Troubled Partnership, (McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, London and Toronto: 1965), p. 52.

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31. Raoul Girardet, Problèmes contemporains de Défense nationale, (Dalloz, Paris: 1974), pp. 159-161.
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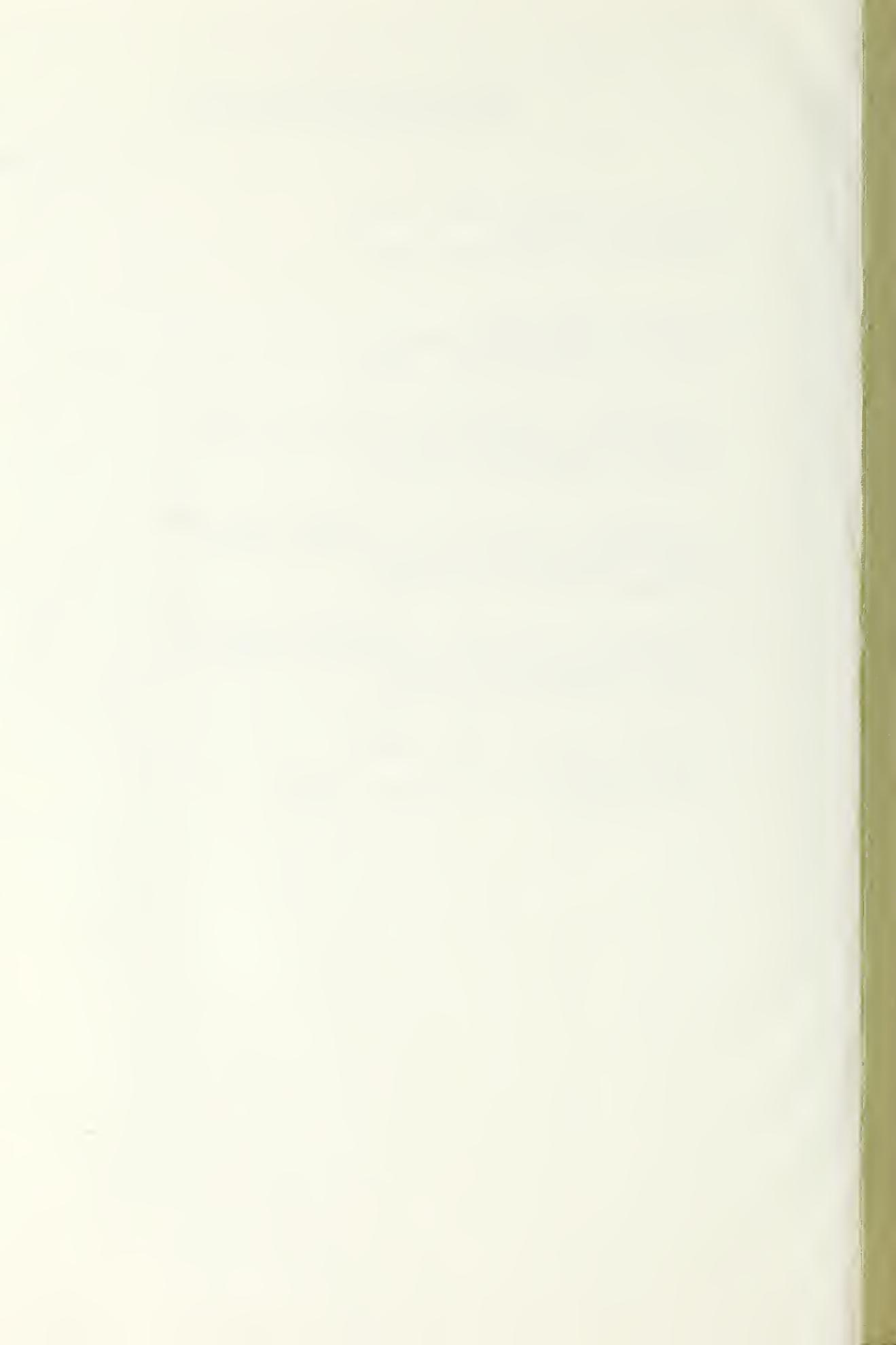
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